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The Hermit's Home

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AND

Other Poems

BY

J. VINTON WEBSTER

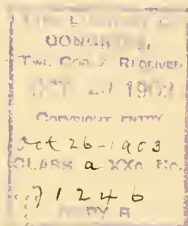
AUTHOR OF AUGUSTA, ETC.



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BY

J. VINTON WEBSTER

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Dedicated to
my beloved daughter,
HELEN WEBSTER CLARK,
Ever kind, gentle and devoted to those she loves.

Prefatory Note.

In preparation of the following poems, the chief purpose in view has been to instill love of humanity, love of the beautiful in nature and of the Divinity, who seems to be present with us in every work and aspiration for human betterment.

J. V. W.

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The Hermit's Home.

CANTO I.

On that fair eve

The hunt had spent its force; the tired hounds
Tracked after me with pant and lolling tongues,
Through groves of noble oak and hazel hedge,
That grew in clumps about the spurs and crags,
Till winding on beneath a rugged bluff,
My pack in wonder stopped to bay a hole,
Rockbound, with door-like arch and slanting roof,
As if a porchway to a pillared hall.

I peered within, and as I gazed, I saw
A frame in somber dress and seated on
A stone, white-haired, and leaning on a cane.
“Why art thou here in this lone place, amid
These rocks and rugged hills, brush-clad and crowned
With cedars green and whispering pines?”

He sat dumfounded at the sight of such
Intrusion, rude, upon his cavern home.
His eyes were large and full, with austere face,
Deep-furrowed with the rasping years of time,
Held council with a breadth of brow that told
Of thoughts beyond the grasp of common minds.

An age, it seemed, he sat in silence there,
And then it did appear he spoke, but yet
No sound—as when a cloud too distant for
The ear to catch the thunder roll, the flash
Of light that blazes on its front, reveals
A power there, prodigious in its wake.

In this suspense that told upon my nerves,
A lark, with golden throat, essayed to sing
His mellow evening hymn in heather high
Above the cavern door, and as his lays
Rang out and echoed sweetly up among
The crowning peaks, the hermit's rigid face
Relaxed into a smile, as when the moon
Does half dispel the haze of dingy night.

"Why am I here," he said, "alone among
These uninviting hills? Come in, strange sir,
And since you stumbled on my hiding place
And do persist in knowledge why I'm here,
And since you seem to have a heart not prone
To gibe the bitterness of human ills,
I will confide some thoughts, in truth, that weigh
Upon me heavily, with trust and hope
That such revealing may you serve and save
From many troubles common to your lot."

Reflection sat serene in every line
Of that grand face, with eyes that seemed to burn
In depth, like vestal fires never quenched.
With amber fingers to his temple pressed,
Half hid within his flowing hair, white as
The camlet's silken fleece for winter clothed;
With left hand resting on his sturdy staff,
Unbarked, deep, knotted, curved about the top.

He sat and forward leaned, mute as the stones
That pillared up the granite hall, with eyes
Bent on the vale below, where ran a stream
With shimmering light that fleck the willow boughs
That gently swayed as fanned the evening breeze.

The sun, hazed in the western horizon,
Seemed like a ball of blood which whirled above
The gleaming sea, that sang its requiem

To all the dead who rock forever, prone
And pale, upon its shining coral reefs.

I could not break the spell, it hung about
My heart as if a dream of something I
Had surely seen, in fact, or shadow-land.
At length he turned and fixed his gaze on me,
Deep set, but yet, with all, so kindly that
I felt assured and braced myself to hear—
As one who hopes, yet fears reality.

“I trust,” he thus begun, “No idle freak
Has brought you hence, a wilful pry into
My gloomy life, wherein the fairest hopes
And bitter wormwood mingle in a way
Which makes me wish that chaos could blot out
The past and rescue memory from all
The ills that weigh like lead upon my heart.

“’Tis true I’ve seen the roses in their bloom
And with the sweet incense of myrtle for
A guide to deep affection, I have felt
The spell of woman’s love, that makes full bliss
Or narrow hell to him who dares to claim
The shining idol of his callow years.

“But let that pass. ’Tis gone! What did I say?
O, what a wretched man I surely am!
My youth was spent half-wild and proud about
A growing city, further east. Its name?
It matters not—suffice, it bordered on
A deep and placid river near the sea—
A mart of trade that sent its argosies
Like phantoms flying from the fertile coast
To traffic largely with the busy world.

“Here wealth displayed utility and pride
In massive blocks of brick and granite built,
With domes and steeples, silver-lined,

All rivaling in growth as if to reach
The pinnacle of great vanity.

“Then to rear came a gentle slope
That lifted up to higher levels, decked
With fair abodes among the native trees—
All interlaced with running vines and banked
About with flowers most profusely.

“And in the distance, where the city lost
Itself among the wooded hills, there ran
A range which seemed a backbone of the world
That lifted up into the blue of God’s
Great arch, that spans this little sphere,
As does some canopy a grain of sand.

“In this fair summerland my lot was cast,
By parentage was to the manor born.
With leisure, life seemed as a holiday,
On which to labor counted as reproach.

“My home, pretentious and environed with
A garden rich in native growth and sweet
Exotics from a hundred sunny climes.
I grew to relish nature as the birds
That swing with song high on the lofty trees
And drink the streams that flow like moving pearls
Among the nodding lilies of the vale.

“My drill and education was the best
The city could afford. My father wished
Me for the ministry, and often on
A Sabbath morn would bid my audience
To songs and prayer within the steepled church.

“But then, I loved the music of the groves,
And God’s great temples in the woods so well,
That lofty-steeped sanctuaries did
Impress my simple mind and heart as some
Great vaulted catacomb, much like unto

The silent halls of Eserhadden, where
Sad spirits whisper of the damned.

“ I much preferred the simple ways of Christ
Who gave his lessons under olive trees,
Or near the summer sea of Galilee,
When twilight lingered over Bethlehem.

“ While thus engaged in thinking of myself,
And manner of my future livelihood,
An incident occurred that did upset
My equipoise and sadden all my life.

“ ’Twas on an April morning blushing in
To May. The Goddess Dawn, had beckoned up
The sun a little way and as his eye
Pursued the glowing, nymph-like form above,
He sent a gleaming ray of luming light
Toward the garden where I stood, and then,
The tears, fresh fallen from the weeping night,
Turned into jewels on the blooming rose.

“ The Daisy, from its golden disk, peeped forth
With dripping eyes as turned each tear into
A glowing rainbow, miniature in form.
The Violet, long used by Io for
Ambrosial food, and from sweet sherbet which
The gods in truth designed for cooling draught.

CANTO II.

“ As nestled they upon the warming earth,
And blushing like some fairy maiden's face
In presence of the one she dearly loves,
There breathed a fragrance not in words to name.
And just beyond, the glowing Myrtle bloomed
And showered forth its beauties on the ground,
As when in rapture Horus gathered them
To line the royal way which Venus trod,
When from the bosom of the waves she came.

“ And so, on every hand, were nodding to
Each other, jewels, most approvingly,
To all who had an image in the heart,
For things divine in ministry of love.

“ It seemed I stood in dreamland for a time,
And then I saw a form upon the walk
That startled me, as does a vision on
The senses creep, of something fair beyond
Control, and spells one stolid as a stone.

“ A little hand was stretched to pluck a rose,
With wrist and arm no chisel could design;
And then was lifted to my gaze, a brow
I cannot well describe; suffice it then,
The glow of beauty there displayed
In form and face and every movement made
That seemed a witchery of flesh and blood,
Contrived, perhaps, in some romantic mood
Of Amphion, with harp and song that built
With exhalation Thebes, and temples grand.

“ Comparison sat dumb at that array,

And cynicism simmered into naught.
Her beaming eyes seemed like two morning stars
Withdrawing from the watches of the night
And languid with the trusty vigil kept.

“While thus confused I stood, there came a sound,
A murmur seemed it, such as one alone
Does sometimes hear in dreams, when those
He loves, draw near, in faith, to comfort him;
And in its melody I heard these words:

“‘Since it seems this fairy place is not
A garden grown to private use alone,
But broad enough in heart of him who aims,
To let the world in rapture gaze upon
The beauty centered here, in betterment
Of soul and mind, that leads to higher thoughts,
I beg of you, who seem to have control,
This rose, some jasmine and just a sprig
Of that fair myrtle bough which hangs so near.’

“I could not move, but seemed entranced,
And for a moment stood like one in sense
Confused by sight of something new and strange.
My tongue refused me utterance, and yet
I reached to prune the jasmine, and then
Meandering about the myrtle bough
I plucked a stem of crowning shower bloom,
Which, at its touch, pearl dew drops fell upon
The earth with fragrance in their dying breath.

“And then advancing to the rosebush where
She stood and leaving that the fairest hand
In all the world had touched, and looking for
A charmer, found a cluster growing on
A single stem, just budding into bloom.

“And when secured the three she named in one
Embrace, I handed her the gems and in

The act sweet vision met in duplicate
And soul to soul seemed there revealed by light
That trembled on the morning star of love.
And then with graceful bow and smile of thanks
She left me standing there like one who sees
A charm or rainbow fading from the sight.
When half assured I was not going daft.
I plucked the rose she touched and folded to
My heart as fond memento of herself,
With blissful hope that she might come again.

“ Each morning when the dew drops sparkled on
The bloom and fragrance scented all the breeze,
I clipped the fading roses, watching all
The garden walks for that strange apparition,—
Substance surely seemed it, yet in truth
So fairy like, I was in doubt and fear,
Lest solid earth gave no support to it.

“ Thus engaged the mornings fled as came,
Auroras lead, and disappointed in
The watch I kept, with hunger in my heart,
Withdrew to shade beside the waterfall.
And yet the sight I longed to see delayed
To come. So days grew lengthwise into weeks,
And when despair stood in the breach of all
My hope, she did appear as light of foot,
As does a water nymph that leaves no track
Behind her flowing robes and sylph like form.

“ She seemed so much at home and glibly talked
Of botany and all the glories of
Her queenly kingdom while I cut and trimmed
The daintiest voluptuaries,
That, in fact, I lost the stupor of
My comatose and gave her glib reply
And compliment when dint of courtesies

Most finely shaded did allow the glint.

“ And with the thanks for flowers well arranged,
She did extend her shapely hand and said:

‘ We live upon the hill, just where the climb
Grows in the level space among the grove
Which Eros planted in the make-up of
His morning walk, when all the infant world
Was stranger to the vine and stately tree;
And as I have a brother studious
And schooled in many things that seem to be
Full cousin to your wish and bent of mind,
Perhaps it would be time unwasted if
You chanced to call on him for intercourse.’

It was enough of skillful hint to me,
And thanked her did I graciously,
As one who feels he’s reached a step upon
The blissful stairway leading to the skies.

“ For three long days I wandered to and fro
Around about my home, like one who’s lost
Within a wood and sees the glintage of
The sun through breakage of the shim’ring boughs,
And restless that he cannot reach his goal
Before the glowing light of day is gone.
Discretion kept me harrowed thus, because
I felt a rush to see the charmer might
But willow hedge my aim and hopeful heart.

“ The third day waned at last, the evening sun
Seemed loath to leave a land so sweet and fair;
But go he must, and wiping dry his eyes
Upon a silver cloud, and gave his brow
A bath of shining mist to soothe, sustain,
Then slowly sank into the troubled flood.

“ The time had come for action, yet my nerves
Were tensioned like a harp with keys that could

Not hold the strings ; a dose of anodyne
Did brace me for a dress in spotless garb,
By sight of which more hearts are won than can
Attain the solid wisdom of the world.

CANTO III.

“The skint of night had harbored in the vale,
And somber Ammon held dominion there
Before I reached the hill on which she lived,
‘Just where the roadway turned among the trees,’
All interlaced, it seemed, with clambering vines.

“The house, full Gothic, gabled all about,
With indent of veranda, ’questered in
Each curve and turn; with mullion windows,
Trained around with jasmine, potted plants,
In every nook and curve, disabled for
A larger hold; with trees of stately growth
On every hand; and garden glories strewn
About, as where sweet nature in a clime
Of tropic sun sheds warmth and showers on
The earth, profusely, as the heart and eyes
Of loving Byblis for her brother Caunus.
In this elysium lived my charmer,
Sweeter for the sweets surrounding her.

“The days went by without a shadow on
Their fleeting wings, and all I do, in truth,
Remember of them is that as they sped,
Sweet incense showered in their balmy wake.
My books forsook me as stern judgment does
A myth, and stared from every shelf, as if
To say, ‘Leave us alone, your head is turned,
And till your senses come again, presume
No handling of our pages while in love,
For solid substance, such as we contain,
Can hardly reach an appetite that feeds
On Julep, mint and things ambrosial;

But foolish man, remember this: The time,
When hungered you will be for other food,
Will come and weigh like lead upon your heart.'
As one who glibly sails a summer sea,
Unmindful that the monsoon breeds within
The torrid zone, I laughed the warning out
Of breath, as some old loon with upper room
To let, and kept the giddy pace of one
With goggles on, who views the crumbling earth
Beneath his feet as fields of evergreen,
Until the stumble of destruction comes.

• The climax, autumn spanned, was reached at last.
Fair Ceres stood among her golden sheaves,
The fading green upon the rustling leaves
Denoted change, their song was sad and in
Their yellow melancholy whispered to
Each other of the fall awaiting them.
The gentle convolvulus, winding up
Its cups upon the garden's granite wall,
Entwined about with spray of rosemary,
Did seem as if in faith were holding forth
To me a bud, while stood I there, and she,
With downcast eyes and sprig of myrtle in
Her hand, as showered on the earth its sweets,
That nimble fingers deftly plucked away.

“ There was no other word to say than that
Which struggled to my lips for utterance.
It came at last, and I, upon my knees,
Without response she gave to me her hand,
And in reply I held the jewel to
My heart, as one forgetting all things else.
The rest I cannot say—no tongue can tell—
Suffice it that the bliss of all my years
Had melted into one delicious kiss,

While words were dumb upon my fevered lips.

“The day was set when we should be as one,
And twine our souls about the same fond hope,
To glide along the coming years with spring
Forever present in the heart.

Time sped on, the day approached, and then
There came the dirge, as when the summer
Fruitage feels the chill of winter's blast
Without a note of warning for the change ;
Or as a malefactor, high in hope,
Is dropped through darkness on to hungry hooks,
When all the world is blissful to his sight.

“’Twas on an evening tide that sat upon
October's rim, while raw-winged winds shook down
From shrub and stally trees their yellow leaves,
Sad emblems of decay and flight of time,
When Beatrice said to me,—that was her name—
‘Dear Leon, do you know there is for you
And I, a double welcome down the way,
Tonight, at Madam Rollins, where the stars,
That now are coming out, will be eclipsed,
And make the golden sun seem dim at noon.

“‘All the fashion and elite of this
Fair town are certain to attend, and then
A Count, late of Marseilles, is billed
To be on hand with gaudy retinue,
And all the gems and silver-slippered sweets,
The burg affords will swing in retiform
To catch, the ambling fortune hunter, with
Gold bricks and shale of great gentility.
Of course you'll go, for ere the autumn frost
Is gone, we will be wed and into bed
And playing cosily at hide and seek.’

“Of course, I could not otherwise than go.

It was a brilliant throng, a modern day
Affair, in which the ballroom floor was but
A sea of whirling silk, too short above
And much too long below, as when in glee
Fair Venus makes a skirt of rainbows,
Gathered at the waist and all above,
A glowing mist of airy nothings set.

“ My winsome love was fairest of them all,
A gorgeous piece of mechanism where
Sweet nature struggled with the milliner
To gain supremacy. At points they were
So intermingled that the practiced eye
Was doubtful where the frilling ended, and
The solid flesh began its mastery.

“ I reeled and swung with her but once, she said
I was too slow, and hugged so tightly too.
She never lost a skip till daylight dawned
Upon the eastern hills, and seemed a thing
Of meager gauze and blushing energy.
The Count, superbly dressed, with diamond
Glitter in the front, and waxed mustache,
With parted hair from crown to sloping brow,
And counted rich in lands he never owned.

“ And seeming like sleuth hound full on the track
Of some large game, he singled out my love,
As does a trapper after otter skins,
Because the fur is fine and meat the best.
The Count, in prying, learned clandestinely,
Her father was a multi-millionaire,
So vied with all his wits to win a gem,
Profusely jeweled with the banker's cash.

“ Quadrille did press upon quadrille and waltzed
He did with her some dozen times, with all
The grace and elite of a nobleman.

And in the welcome rest between the heats
I caught them in a cosy corner with
Their nodding heads together, like two doves
That bill and coo the fading twilight through.

“This was too much. The shaft of jealousy,
Distilled in gall, did send its poison through
My blood as adder sting that knows no cure.
I hid away from sight as does a bird
Deep wounded at the heart, and when the time
Had come to go, she bid the Frenchman call
On her, with look that did betray a sigh,
As when one longs for something not possessed.

“As home we went I chided her for such
Display of freedom with a stranger Count,
And wished to know, that since we were engaged
And near our wedding day, why she had bade
Him urgently to call, as one who held
As souvenir your heart and household keys.

“At this she sulked in silence for a time,
And then with blazing face that paled
The rising sun's full glare upon the hills,
She said, ‘You are impertinent beyond
Endurance, sir, and seem to think I'm but
A jug of common pottery or urn
In which to store and hide your jealousy,
And bow submissive to your will, as one
Who bends like willow boughs before the wind.
I'll have my way and do and dare my right
As woman free; and from this hour call
Engagements off; the die is cast, the Count
Will take your place with winnings on my side.’

“I stood, when she had left the carriage at
Her father's home, as one half dazed—
As one who gathers from the ground his limp

And trembling limbs, from fall prodigious in
Its height, and staggering, seeks a resting place.
I sought my home, the cold sweat stood upon
My face, my hands did shake as does an aspen
When a storm sets from a brimming sea.

“ I felt a choking thirst and pain, no one
Can ever know, save him who has gone through
The fate of love without a recompense.
A raging fever came upon me like
A venomed wolf upon a stricken lamb.
The struggle lasted full a month, and more.
The mind, with balance gone, did wander like
A spirit lost, and darkness, woven from
The sable wings of night, pressed down upon
My troubled senses like a canopy
That's fallen from its shaky moorings.

CANTO IV.

“O, thou unending Time!

That measures minutes and eternities,
The gentle balm and trouble soother of
All human ills, in thy embrace I found
My recompense, as when a grieving child
Seeks consolation on its mother's breast.
The glowing spring, with all its fragrant bloom,
Did beckon me to health as comes,—
As comes the weary prodigal to share
The love and comfort of his father's home.
And in this waiting on sweet nature's process,
Leaned I for that strength that comes of rest,
As does some ruined pensioner on God,
When life seems but a blank of destiny.

“'Tis true that reconciliation with
My lot was hard of fair adjustment, for
My hopes were but as withered leaves strewn upon
The ground by bleak untimely winds before
The summer had matured its blushing fruit.
A year had passed, with glimpse of sun and much
Of sable wing, since first I met the charm
That kills or cures a potent phantasy
Which runs in streams that float the fickle ship
Beyond the moorings of security.

“Thus hopes are shivered into atoms by
A single word, and darkness settles down
Upon a soul that sees no light beyond—
Neither had she sent a word to me
In all the weary weeks I wrestled with

This demon, death, and striving hard to hold
My mind above the grasp of lunacy.
I saw her not, nor cheering word received.
The Count, as I have understood, became,
In fact, her daily escort, rambling where
The woods were green, and hand in hand along
The shaded stream where shining pebbles washed
Their faces when the morning sun came up.

“Conceiving of the prime advantage that
A blue-blood union, coupled with the name
Of ‘Count’ would give their daughter in the world
Of strut and giddy fashion, sire and dame,
Of low estate, yet rich in corner lots
And bank accounts, were anxious for the trade,
As he who seeks to gain a blooded horse
With lucre, huxter made, and filly fair
Of mustang breed.

“So pledged they willingly some millions cash
To bridge the gulf that sadly separates
The clink of ducats, vulgar, from the prime
Respectability of blooded prince,
Sprung from a castled Lord, brave in his own
Defense of many robberies.

“Beatrice, it seems, in wilful mood had kicked
Considerably before she was disposed
To pull the way the Count essayed to go.
It does appear she had no depth of love
For him, and doubt of happiness did make
Her saw a cord of boards, with sire and dame
Before she gave her word and full assent
To take the name of Countess Halowell,
And make abode in ruined castle on
A hill, rock-ribbed, with scanty shrubbery
And crumbling walks, on which the skin-dressed Lords

Of olden time had broiled and eat their game,
With twisted legs, prone on the stony ground.
O, wonderful indeed, the fool a man
Can make himself, when crinolined
To dizziness and love-sick to the eyes !
If he could ever learn to bear the brunts
Of little piques and spites and jealousies
So common to the frilling female heart,
And always have the wit to smile and bow
With compliment when sore and angry at
The sting of slight, his conquest would be sure,
Though hedged about with moat and brazen guns.

“ But let that pass—all opportunity
Is gone to rectify the errors of
A day distilled in bitterness of soul.
Suffice it that I had no longer hope,
Nor wish to prosecute the law, which I
Had chosen as an aid to reach the round
Upon the ladder leading up to fame.
And so, ambition sitting in the dust
And playing quits with all the bitter past,
I quietly disposed of walks and tenements
And lands, at prices fair, but not the best.

“ Then packing full my buckskin haversack
And saddle bag, with ample blankets rolled
Behind, I mounted Sanger—such a horse
As all Bedouins love to own and prize
Above the shining pearls that showered on
Fair princess of the East by lavish hand,
Or tinsel show of some great conqueror.
Black as the raven's wing, full-headed, round,
With ample girth, broad breast, limbs of steel,
Yet nimble as the antelope that runs
Before the wind, like mist in shadow-land—

My sturdy spenser, breech to saddle breach,
With muzzle, stirrup pointing, handy for
My major hand, in case of urgent need,
To manage most conveniently.

“ Thus mounted on my charger for a tramp
That spans the continent. Good Rover stood
In wonder, looking at my 'couterments,
And waiting for the word to follow on.
Faithful dog! Newfoundland, scanty half,
A shepherd, quarter, and the balance bull;
With hide all lined with silky hair that grew
In spots of black and white, with here and there
A skint of glossy tan, that came to him
Legitimate, upon his mother's side.
His face was of that kind that plainly gives
Assurance of integrity in man or beast;
With ample brow and brownish eyes that did
Display intelligence that plainly said,
As any words could tell, ‘ You are my friend
And loving master, be thou well assured
I follow wheresoever leadest thou,
Though lurking death be in each track we tread.’

“ A narrow, angling pathway followed up
On easy grade to higher ranges, checked
The steed, and turning looked we down upon
The city, as the morning sun brazed
Every roof and dome and lifting spire,
Flaming like the great Promethean fire
God kindled on Olympian crags.
I blessed the gainly town, and wept at my
Discomfiture, like one who leaves his heart
Behind, in search of desolation.

“ Finally, as moves the mourner from
The grave of one he loves, I faced the west,

As singing pines, paused in their morning hymn,
And bid the blazing sun take precedence
Of all the gentle breeze's murmurings
Among the groves that crowned the azure hills.

CANTO V.

“The winding way we diligent pursued
Across sweet streams and little sunny vales
And on through woods that knew no haunt of man,
Through brush and tumbled trees, wind shaken in
The storms that measure potent strength with Fo,
And when the day had spent its luming force,
With stretching shadows lank and sere among
The burnished trees, that told of night’s approach,
While in the hushing sunset hour, sat
In worship of the failing day, there came
From high within the arching limbs a sound—
A mellow song of sweetest praise to Him
Who made them in the early ages of
The world, to live beyond and far above
The troubled lot of man, who knows not God
Is ever present in his works, but seeks
The talisman of happiness in grim
Pursuits of wealth, which wither in his grasp,
Like dead sea fruit, that in its bitterness
Can never satisfy the fickle heart.

“As faded tips of light, and haze of night
Began to hang like mantles in the woods,
We reached a little vale, cut through with stream
Of shining water, singing on its way
To meet the brimming river as it moves
To mingle with the tides that rock the sea.

“Here on the streamlet’s brow and gentle slopes
And in the little vale, the green of spring
Just budding into summer bloom, did laugh

Upon the earth, and over all, the oaks,
With outspread arms, in solemn grandeur seemed
To whisper from their moving lip-like leaves,
'Peace be to those who dwell within our shade
And will essay to worship with us when
The evening comes, and glory in the King
Of day, when through our boughs He darts His shafts
Of gold upon the sod beneath and all
The floral beauties at our feet do send
Up incense as we praise.'

"A little fire kindled by the stream
To hold a shining teapot and a pan
Did seem as sacrilege in such a place;
And when the frugal meal had passed,
Its licking tongues let go the smutty sticks,
While darkness spread her mantle in the vale.
And in the interval of pause and night
Had Sanger fed upon the grassy slopes,
And being sated sauntered up to us;
With shining eyes, and rubbing nose upon
My knee, did say as nearly as a horse
Can say, 'How much I love thee for the care
You take of me and to allow my romp
With loosened rein upon a pasture rich
In all things sweet and rare;' while Rover
Came and cuddled at my feet, with jaw
Upon his brindle paws, and looking in
My face, as one who studies into depths
Beyond his keen, for divination of
The soul of man, that he may know and feel
The spirit moving there, the better to
Perform his ever willing services.

"There and thus environed, blanket wound,
With overcoat for rest of head, I dozed,

And dreamed and looked into the stellar world
Where in its azure, burning lamps hung out,
As if to aid the pigmies of
This world to learn the sober lesson of
Our littleness in God's unending
Universe and call reflection to
The phantasies and selfish ends we seek,
And thus to give us more of heart and mind
And human sympathy for pressing ills
That others bear unceasingly.

“Most commonly the sweetest hearts are those
That suffer most, while smiling fortune is
The honey-worded dragon, often
Leading down to cold disdain of those
Less fortunate in worldly things, and with
A smile puts off distress with promises,
Until too late to rectify the wrong.
O, man! of but a day upon the earth!
Why play with conscience in the rush for gain
And dig your grave upon the brink of hell?

“Thus engaged in thought the dreamy night
Advanced a pace; the air seemed burthened with
The hum of insects, mingled with the sound
Of rustling leaves that stirred and fell as passed
The breezes through the branches of the trees.
And while I listened, still and mute to all
This melting harmony, the night crow's caw
Was heard upon the hills, and then in sad
And rasping cadence came the whip-poor-will's
Ungainly call, as if distress oppressed
Its loneliness. And finally, as cap
To crown the glory of the waning night
The Philomela of the ancient world,
In all the sweetness of its mellow tones,

Far back in darkness of the somber wood
Commenced his saddened lay that hung upon
The ear like some sweet cadence coming from
The vale of childhood's fairyland, or where
The blessed forever tune their harps and sing
In praise and presence of the Infinite.

“ How long these charms from dwellers in the vale
Did hold my spirit wakeful in the arms
Of sleep, I never knew, but when returned
To consciousness, the morning sun had tinged
To gold the feathery tops of all the pines
That grew and shimmered on the mountain crest.
Good Rover stood nearby, and with a whine
And paw upraised, seemed anxious to direct
Attention to the singing brook, where stood
A lovely fawn, so trim and perfect in
Its form, that Bonheur never painted such,—
With slender neck and head and ears erect,
And yellow eyes most prominent, it stood
Upon four shapely legs that shames all art
In reproduction of their counterpart.

“ Its body round, in color spotted, like
The sky when snowflakes start toward the earth.
‘ Buck-ague ’ seized good Rover in the joints,
And with his paw uplifted, pointed to
The fawn, as if to say, ‘ See ! there’s your chance ! ’
I shook my head. He then, as if afraid
The fawn would see his moving form, crept on
His haunches to my gun, and placing his
Right paw upon it, gave a low, deep whine,
With look surprised at my indifference.
I shook my head again, when he did growl,
And muttering rage, essayed to catch the fawn,
Which nimbled off in graceful leaps and bounds

That measured land beyond my view before
Poor Rover reached the running stream.

“ With not a cloud the jeweled day wore on—
The sun had traveled in his car of state
Across the sky, and now was looking at
Me through a passing ray that hung upon
His upper limb as sentinel to call
The busy world to evening vespers, when
There came in view a fox with tired pace,
And running thwart the vale, there followed it
A sable bear, full tilt, with jolting jumps,
As if possessed to have a dinner ere
The night should flood with darkness all the world.
My gun lay handy by and ere the cub
Of Bruin bounced his prey, a shot rang out
And brought the king of Urus to the ground.
Before I reached its side old Rover ran
Ahead and putting forth his paws upon
The beast did laugh with lolling tongue and in
His eyes there seemed to be a passing thought
That plainly said, ‘ I do forgive you for
The fawn you spared, for now we have, in truth,
The better game to feast upon.’
No hunter ever bagged a finer prize ;
His hide ran slip’ry with the oozing oil
Before its final severance from spine
And flaking fats, that made its form appear
Like some prime log, rolled from the hills when snows
Of winter feel at heart a gentle thaw.
Sweet steaks and spitted ribs and spicy stews,
With watercress and baker’s bread brought from
The town, surpassed, it seemed, King Arthur’s fare,
In olden time, when skins were clothes, and men
Of greatest estate sat by ‘ the table round,’

In converse of the chase, with mountain goat
And venison haunches piled to make the feast.

CANTO VI.

“ For three days longer lived we in this fair
Abode of rest, where selfish man has not
Essayed to take God’s beauty from the earth
That lucre might accrue to lust of wealth.
These days were as a balm to me, mind-sore
And harrowed to the heart with false conceits
And ruined hopes, blank with uncertainty.
Each amber evening, with its crescent moon
And star-lit canopy, brought back the hum
Of insect life, the sound of rustling leaves,
The qualking, forked-tongue crow, with echoes from
The sad-mood whip-poor-will and nightingale’s
Consoling notes of sweetest melody.
Perhaps it was ordained that each should take
His chalice brimmed with gall, to learn him of
His littleness and cleanse his midget soul
Of selfish ways and struts ungainly made.

“ ’Twas on a Sabbath morning, such as must
Appear in Paradise, where flow in peace
The limpid streams with verdant slopes through zones
Of stately cedars, topped with mellow light
From golden suns, steadfast in purpose to
Dispel the shadows lingering in the woods,
That we essayed to leave the charming vale.
With bear meat jerked, and hardtack left, some ham
And condiments, with all our camping traps,
We buckled on stout Sanger for a start.

“ Still sore in memory for all I’d left
Behind—fond friends, and many talismans

Of hope, with saddened soul and heart oppressed,
And mind in stagger with the hard resolve
To brave the wilderness and arid plains,
Least common to the haunts of men, to go—
I knew not where—perhaps to distant shores
That border on the Occidental sea.

I made the mount and gathering up the rein
For early start. To my surprise I did
Observe a wood lark hopping up among
The branches of a blooming hawthorn tree,
Not twenty steps away, and when he'd reached
The topmost bough I noted that he had
A broken wing, that limp and sore hung from
His shoulder blade. A moment's rest, and then
With chirp and underwarble, seemingly
To set his tune, commenced a song of praise
So deep and soul-enchanting that I sat
Like one delayed by messenger from Him
Who seemeth to have given cadence to
The warbling bird to soothe the fevered brow
Of care and fan to life and sparks of flame
Hope's dying embers in the troubled heart.

“The silver, laughing stream, the solemn woods,
The echoes from the hills, seemed drinking in
The glory of that tender song, as if
'Amens,' were breathing from them all.
I blessed that lame-winged lark that did forget
Its own distress in that sweet hour when
The lifting sun told of the Infinite,
Who sanctifies the pure in heart and lifts
Toward the upper world the aspiration in
A song of gentleness and praise.

“Consoled and comforted by that sweet song,
Like Æneas, son of Anchises, sore in mind

With sable hopes, faced westward from the site
And ashes of Old Ilium, seeking some
Asylum far beyond his ruined home,
We sped our way through pathless woods, deep glen
And coves, across the trails of man and beast,
High hills, green vales and dreary waste, where skipped
The deer and blear-eyed hare through stunted sage,
Sore pressed for drink and substance on the plain,—
Some day, perhaps, to bloom as does the rose
When water comes and tillage takes the lead,
When happy homes shall dot the land, as does
The whitecaps line the mighty sea.

“ Then on and on, and up the mountain’s slopes,
And on by crags and peaks that seem to hold
The upper world above the azure vault
Of famous Lebanon, and on the slopes
And levels down below great cedars grow ;
Where mountain daisy, primrose and the crocus
Intervening, seemingly, that fair
And gentle nature in her grandest courts
Is ever anxious to display her love
And care of all things beautiful.

“ We paused to rest and worship in these woods,
In grandeur nearest God of any land,
Left on the earth, unknown and scant explored.
Then on and on we moved by narrow trail,
Unkept, and winding down the mountain side,
Through ancient groves and dells, by singing streams,
Until the rolling hills and sunny plains
That stretch to westward, lost in haze, beside
The sunset sea, fell on my vision like
A fairyland, or Tadmor where the palms
Spread forth their leaves, inviting to the shade.

“ Wearied with three moons of lonely tramp,

Through every phase of scene and varied clime.
At last we found a little, laughing vale,
With western outlook on the shining sea,
In length a league and scarce one-half as much
In width, with soil as rich as skirts the Nile,
And climate unsurpassed upon the earth ;
Fine clumps of oak, as if on guard were placed
About the vale, while here and there through all
Its length stood single sentinels and some
That seemed relieved of duty for the time,
And tattled, two or three together in
A place, like busybodies do who have
Some scandal to report, in whisper or
In pantomime.

“ A limpid stream ran near
The southern verge of this fair land and on
Its brink stood willows weeping, alders bright
Of trunk and limb, and frequently a clump
Of hazel wood and hawthorn thickets,
Intervening with wild roses rare.

“ Just beyond the southern line of this
Bright stream, as if designed by nature for
A terrace, rose a splendid hill that stretched
The valley's length from east to west, and on
It stood in clusters and alone, bull pine,
Small roble oaks, some laurel wood and oft
A sturdy cedar cone, while from the earth
Beneath their shade, grew labyrinths of ferns,
Blackberry vines and yellow crocus bloom.
This conditioned growth extended round
The valley's head and margined on the rocks
And rough-hewn hills that bound it on the north,
While on the west the sapphire sea complains
Of winds and ever-changing of the moon

That keep her whitecaps always on the run.

“This trouble, like a spirit never free,
Moves up her tides and surf upon the shore
To breast and mingle with the shining sand,
And in the sound there seems a requiem
For all the slumbering dead that line her depths.
Just midway of the vale from east to west,
And on the northern side and running up
And down the stream full half a mile,
Then at angles right across the plain,
The lines extending past a little bench,
Then higher up among the spurs and cliffs,
Where hazel, alder wood and scrubby pines
Glean scanty substance from decaying shale
And mould of withering herbs and fallen leaves,
I purchased, of pre-empter, for abode.

“Each quarter-section in this sunny vale
Was entered for a home, improved and had
Its thrifty habitanee, who raised some corn,
A little wheat, some stock that grazed upon
The hills, with garden rich in succulents
And door-yard flowers most profusely grown.

“A schoolhouse, white, upon a little hill,
A union church nearby all dressed in brown,
With squatty belfry struggling from its top,
And gothic gables, friezed in snowy white;
With market-place and trading-post across
The hills to southward, twenty miles away,
Made up the features of this sunny clime.

CANTO VII.

“ Here in this vale, upon the plot of land
Before outlined, we did, in faith, essay
To build a home; that is to say, myself,
Old Rover, lame from his long walk, and my
Good steed, then lank and lean from overwork
In dunnage packing, plain and mountain
Crossing, often stinted in his rations
Down to fennels, greasewood and white sage.

“ They helped me build the house? Be sure they did.
The long, slim pines I felled upon the slopes
And cut in lengths to form the walls. Fast to
A chain about one end of each peeled pole
I hitched my noble horse and with a snort
At starting, snaked them to the spot I had
Selected for the slippery, round-logged cot.

“ And when the logs had pushed their noses through
The hillside shale to reach the chosen site,
With smaller skints, neat skinned for ridge pole and
For rafters, shakes for roof and puncheons for
A floor, split from a stately sugar pine,
Were all upon the ground—a bench of land
Some forty feet above the level plain—
Where growth of oak and alder sparsely stood.

“ Southward set I there my cabin’s face
That overlooked the prospect of the vale,
While to the west full half a league away,
Obscured in distance by some spreading trees,
The ocean gleamed at every setting sun,
Like robes imagined for Divinity.

The work commenced, thereon I hinged my thoughts,
With aids, old Rover and my sturdy steed,
Advancement seemed forever manifest.

“How did these animals help on the work?
Good Rover learned to know the name of nail,
Of hammer, saw and chisel, too, a shake,
Or square or spirit level, so I had
No other care than name the thing I wished,
And it would come between his teeth, and when
The job was full in hand his schooling seemed
So well engraven on a thoughtful mind
That he was ever on the watch to give
His aid upon the ground, or high above,
Where leaned the willow ladder on the wall,
Up which he went as nimble-footed as
An urchin climbing for the fun of it.

“When after all the skill we did possess
And after weeks of steady toil, the house
Stood prim and trim, good Sanger, sleek
With leisure and fair feeding on the green
Bunch grass of hill and clover on the plain,
Came up of sturdy step to view the work.

“With Rover, round and round the house we went,
As if inspectors of a castle built
For prince, or magnate of some sugar trust.
We all were proud of it. The corners matched
So closely that the logs hung not an inch
Apart, and chinked with strips of pine and lime
Made on the ground. The roof, third pitch of shakes,
Half lapped, with eaves and gables well projecting,
Door and windows on the southern part,
Out-letting on a little rustic porch.

“The north wall held a chimney made of stone,
With jams and arch and hearth of diorite,

Or something like it, hewn from quarry on
The hill. Then on the East, a cosy place
For kitchen, built with window and a door,
The well-hewn puncheon floor fit snug and well,
With ceiling overhead of like account.

“ When I and Rover went within to look
About, old Sanger stood with bleary eyes in
The door and whinnied at our leaving him
Without, and seemed concerned to know what we
Proposed on his account, as shelter from
The winter storms that sat foreboding in
The north. The hint, so plainly given, struck
Me with the thought that stable nigh we'd build,
Near where a weeping willow stood, some rods
Away, prime west nor'west the compass marked.
And there it stands, constructed chiefly of
The remnants left in putting up the house.

“ A spring of crystal water welled up from
A crevice in a ledge of stone that formed
For it a little basin, shaded by
A green bay tree that manifestly
Measured years by centuries.
In all the work we did, our neighbors seemed
Most kind and affable and often lent
A helping hand, as if in token of
Regard, which signifies in all the world,
Where soul and sense commune that kind is one,
And common to us all, as grow and bloom
The crowning roses, red and yellow gold,
That grow in strength the more we nurture them.

“ If kindred we are, then should kindness lead
The way to better things, as toils in pain
The homeward bound, with hand extending help
To some poor, weary brother on the way,

And pointing to the blessed abode above.

“So when the task of building grew complete,
October’s strides had reached half-way his span,
And as he passed, the leaves upon the trees
Began to pale with fear, for well they knew
The north wind, howling in the rugged hills,
Betokened them no good or recompense
For all the glory they had given to
The early spring and summer’s cooling shade,
Where parching thirst and heat can never come.

“And now when all this lovely angel work
Is hardly done, their dirge is being sung
By dreary Boreas in northern climes,
In blend with mournful whisper of the pines,
That sing as does the ever-troubled sea,
The requiem of all its strangled dead.
And thus it is with everything that lives—
Each has its day and dying disappears—
While memory forgets their resting place
In rush for phantasies that give no rest.

“The later fall and winter spent we in
Attempt to clear a field of scattering brush
And drooping limbs that lankly hung about
The spreading oaks, which seemed in strength to hold
The valley down in place and annually,
Like Ammon, with a lavish hand, upon
The earth does scatter brown and lusty nuts,
Which long-nosed chuk and herds grow fat upon.

“And when relieved of growth superfluous,
Old Sanger fat and favored by his rest
And choice of feed, was in new harness hitched
Unto a shining plow, and with my guide,
The rich, brown soil, surprised in its long sleep,
Rolled from the mould, dark lap on lap,

Like ridging breakers on a sandy shore.

“Some spelts and wheat we sowed, and later on,
When spring, with belt of green and budding robes,
We planted corn, and then a garden, fenced
With pickets split upon the hills; we set
And seeded many rows and many kinds
Of succulents, with sage and flower plants
In plots, on curves and circles near the house,

“And ere the lovely Queen of spring, in faith,
Had finished arbors for the summer's heat,
In woodland and along the shining streams,
The fields were green with waving grain that gave
Great promise, when appeared the harvest moon,
And laughed while drinking morning dew and warmth
That came as heralds from the rising sun,
While blooming flowers nodded as I passed
About my little home, as if to say,

“ ‘ We came to thee as fragrant breath from God,
That in thy troubles thou shalt not forget,
With us, to bless the hand that made us all.’
The ocean shore was oft my rambling ground.
With Rover, in the lead, we traced it up
And down a hundred times, on hunt of shell
And shining pebbles scattered on the sand.

“We bathed within the rush of rolling surf,
And oft when standing out so far as safe,
A stick I'd hurl out on the ridging sea,
When Rover, watching every act, would bound
In after with a yell, and swimming, float
Upon the surf, until the prize secured,
Returned it to me with a laughing look
That wisely said, ‘ I dare, in faith, to go
Where ever you can throw beyond your depth,

Out in the booming sea and with much ease
Will gladly bring the stick or token back.'

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CANTO VIII.

“ Sometimes the brimming ocean seemed in great
Distress, as if in lamentation of
A brewing storm, with haze and scudding clouds,
And guffs and swells that preface lifting winds,
Which gulf great ships and monsoon all the seas,
That throb with luming heat in tropic climes
Where winter never comes with icy hand.

“ Living thus, in peace, untrammelled by
The busy world, two years and more, of time
Sped past on golden wings; yet sore in heart
I was, with depth of wound that seldom heals.
Then came a sudden change, so mingled in
With sunshine and with shadow that my life
For thirty years has been like one who dreams,
Then wakes from troubled sleep and turning on
His pillow but to dream again.
In all those years my soul has traveled with
My heart and mind from pinnacles of bliss
To depths of woe that leads infinity.

“ I know not why it was, no human tongue
Can tell. It seems to me a link of fate
To fate so strange, I have no name for it,
The fringing event of this stranger tale
Came arm in arm with one foul April day
That set the giant trees to swinging like
So many brittle reeds, that splitting fall
In every gust and adverse wind that blows.

“ It was a day so fierce that all the hills
Seemed breaking up; the pines and sturdy oaks
Lost all their dignity, their groaning trunks

And twisting tops forgot composure in
The fearful gale that howled through wood and plain
Like demons loosened from the under world.

“In this array of force that seemed to rock
The adamantive hills and set at naught
Great nature’s equipoise, I heard a call,—
It seemed to come up from the ocean, miles
Away,—‘Don’t laugh!’ The superstitions of
The world are based on facts, deep-hidden from
The common mind, that in its ignorance
Of what the womb of nature holds, sets up
For truth the strangest phantasies.

“It may be thus with me in this affair,
But then we know there are experiences,
Most numerous, that clearly indicate
There’s soul force over soul that travels with
The wind and makes impressions truthful when
Great sorrow sways the sympathetic mind.

“But be this as it may, at all events
The call I seemed to hear took hold on me
With force so potent and surprising that
From playing with my dog I moved toward
The door and op’ning it I heard the call
Again above the roaring tempest, then
A little later wailings as from one
Who has set hope aside and hovers on
The brink of death. There could be no mistake,
It was distress engulfed in floods of foam
And breaking waves upon the cruel sea,
Abandoned, seemingly, by God and man.
I felt constrained to go; impelled like one
By fate decreed. I closed the door, my teeth
Were set like those of some good soldier called
To fill a breach, death-lined with noble men.

With Rover at my side, we faced the storm.
The weeping willow shelt'ring Sanger's stall
Had lost its footing and lay twisted up,
Prone on the earth like Alegeone in throes
Of death stretched out beside the brimming tide.

“My trusty horse, half frightened by the storm
Was quickly buckled to the sturdy cart
And while I plied the strappings, traces, bit
And lines, old Sanger surely seemed to know
That some wild ride was starting from the slips.
And Rover, stricken dumb at such display
Of madness on my part, stood by the rig
With flaring eyes, and ears erect, but when
The start was made he ran ahead, as if
Full conscioes that the trouble was upon
The swiftly running sea or foaming surf—
Death laden, cold and pitiless.

“It was a fearful ride, the howling wind
Stood dead ahead; the swaying oaks that lined
The vale groaned under their uncommon load,
And giant limbs long used to angry storms,
With grinding wail fell prone upon the ground.
The lowing herds in peaceful pasture caught
Infection from the mighty wind and pressed
By falling trees, tore through the fences like
The Bison in his maddened flight to reach
A shelter from the howling elements.
No whip was needful on old Sanger's sides,
From start to finish he was on the run,
As when a stag with hounds and horn behind
Disdains the earth and seems to fly with wings
More potent than possessed the sacred bulls
That lined Egyptian labyrinths.

“So wild we went the surf was soon at hand,

In looking seaward we beheld, far off,
A vessel black, with rigging gone, high on
A mountain wave, and then as phantom of
The sight she disappeared, to rise no more.
Left, there was no sign of living thing,
Black desolation held dominion there,
And laughed to scorn the prowess of the world.

“While yet I peered out on the blinding storm
There seemed to me, tossed on the running surf,
A tiny speck of something more than foam,
Slow sinking out of sight, then on a crest
Would rise again a little more distinct.
A few more times it rose and fell like gauze,
Or wrap of red, light bordered for a skirt;
It seemed to come in with the drifting tide
And then an undertow would take it back
Apace, a little dainty garment surely it
Appeared, with some frail form enclosed,
Perhaps an hundred yards from where the surf
Beat on the sandy shore, with butting froth
Of chopping waves and foaming eddy whirls.
O, Destiny that rides the blinding storm!
Where is thy pity for the dead thou hast
Entombed? Suspense was agony to me.

“I grasped the dog, his fore arms in my hands,
And standing up erect, I pointed to
The object sought and with kind words set on—
A gleam of soul ran through his eyes,—he saw
The apparition and with consciousness
Of what I wished, spring out upon the flood
And like a mariner who dares to die
When duty calls, he struck the running tide
With might that seemed prodigious for a dog.

“He neither turned to right or left, but fought

Through surf and foam, as one in duty bound
To save the lost and shame old Anubis.
At last he reached the form and right about
Set out for shore again; with back to back
He came, with head run through the apron strings,
His burthen's front above the lapping foam.
I met him in the tide, full to my waist,
And bracing, held steadfast from undertow,
While surf at times ran high above my head.

“Thus poised unsteadily, I lent the dog
A helping hand in his distress, which was
So great, that never could he, living,
Reached the land. A little nearer then
I gathered up the form and wading out,
There laid my charge upon the gleaming sand,
A form so fair and sweet I never had beheld,
A face in model Greek, long golden hair,
Small hands and feet with tiny slippers on,
A scarlet cashmere waist and dainty skirt
Of opal colored silk. The form, in age,
Was surely not beyond its early teens.

“The life seemed gone, and that distracted me.
How sweet and beautiful she seemed in death!

O, lashing waters, waste of some great flood
Poured on the world to sate the wrath of God,
Display your might; in foaming caverns dwell,
And bellow with your threats of booming hell.

Was it an everlasting sleep? Or was
There yet a chance of rescue from the grave?

“At this I fell upon my knees and set
To chaffing, kneading, rolling, as if fate
Had held in his slender balance hope delayed.
At little brandy poured upon the lips
Set death to doubting his supremacy;

A tremor ran through all the lovely frame,
Then with a wrenching gasp the bosom heaved,
A gurgling sound of water running from
The mouth; then came the breath in agony
Of utterance, like some poor soul long held
In comatose. She lived! And soon her large
Brown eyes were opened full upon my face.
Her respiration grew more regular,
And then she said composedly, in lute
Like tone, but hardly audible, 'Why am
I resting here and where are now my friends?'
She spoke a tongue I had not heard for years,
But still I did essay direct reply.
Rehearsing all I knew and how I found her in
The flood and how old Rover rescued her.
She seemed delighted with the dog and put
Her arms about his neck so lovingly
That Rover, hoping he had made a friend,
Did lick her smiling face like one who claims
A valid right to do as much.

"Hastily I wrapped my buggy robes
About the shivering form and placing it
Snugly in the shay, I mounted by her side.
Then giving Sanger ample rein, we ran
Like Atalanta leading Hippomenes.
Up through the vale we flew before the wind,
For full I realized that, soaked and chilled
Through to the bone, Atropos lingered near,
With lifted hand to cut the thread of life.

"At this uncommon speed we reached the home
Of Lulu Wanna, wife of Bonadena,
Late of Italia, refined and lovable,
With ample room and comfortable.
The husband met us at the wicker gate,

The front of an enclosure, flower blown,
And when we went into the house with her
Poor, little, helpless form, chilled through and through,
From washing of the sea, the lovely wife,
A bonny bit of wit and woman's heart,
Stood dumb a moment watching what we brought,
And then the pity of it melted down
Her eyes and with a mother's love she bent
And kissed the cold, blue lips and laying off
The robe, glib felt about the tender limbs,
And in a moment realizing that
The greatest haste was all that lay between
The girl and death, she gathered up the gem
As if a babe, and ere the story could
Be told, had placed the flower in a bath
Of water, warmed, to make a ruddy glow;
Then rubbed and dressed in dry, warm clothes,
And tucked in bed with sips of steaming tea,
The little waif went off to sleep, like one
In swoon and weary with fatigue.

“For days grim specters of the shadowland
Seemed in the air of that sweet tenement.
A fever raged within the blood of that
Fair stranger in a stranger land. Her tongue
Made mellow sounds between a sob, a sigh,
Or song, delirious in her present woe.
Like Sappho hanging on Lucadian rim
In sorrow for her faithless Mytilene.
Hardly could I leave the house, for through
The rage of her delirium, were times
When came a word that told of want and I
Alone, of all the vale, could understand
A thing she said. The climax came at last.

“The doctor shook his head, but deigned to say,

‘An hour will decide her fate.’ It seemed
To me a soul so truly beautiful
Should never die if destiny had linked
The fairest forms with immortality.
Passing strange and indefinable
Is human sympathy, it surely is
A touch transmitted from Divinity,
A glint, a spark of soul force, ray of light,
That strikes deep-seated at a glance and burns
Like vestal fire through eternity.
It is uncommon surely, but it comes
Sometimes in life to every soul, as comes
The morning light before the lifting sun.

“How small does grow the vanity of man
When life and death hang in the balance by
A hair and human aid stands powerless
To give a helping hand to those we love.
The recompense of such an hour comes
To him who hath the soul to see that all
Of life is like a fitful song with smiles
And tears, in which the notes are memories
Of sweets and sorrows passed and dint of hope
For happy time to come, with consciousness
Of mind and heart each day hath record there
Of all the jewels we have gathered here,
And all the ills our deeds have shadowed forth,
And that the crucible of conscience,
Ever silently is burning out the dross
Of every act and thought that’s selfish or
Untrue, and slowly gathering up the gems
Discovered for the settings of a crown
And refuse black for torment for the damned.

“Didst ever thou, with fear and breath abate,
Behold the night at noonday, when the sun

Had shadowed all his face, and thought perhaps,
He might not shine again upon the earth?
And how you had to hold your heart when glimpse
The coming day broke by the moon's dark disk?
This may compare, as does a river to
A sickly stream, the feeling that was mine,
When light came back into her loving eyes.

“The angel ministry that brought her form
To life again, with hope of many years,
Turned all that household in happy tears,
Father, mother, Janie, ten, most fair,
And Robbie, seven, was the baby there.

CANTO IX.

“ Great ocean canst thou not assuage thy thirst
To toss such beauty on thy rolling ribs,
And take so many to thy caverns down
And wrap in seaweed, there to rock
Forever in thy cradles, as you sing
The mournful dirge of human destiny?
I grieve with thee. But then it may be for
The best, as He who made it never made
A thing in vain, though oft it seemeth so.

“ Without the ocean every living thing
Upon the globe would die; the rivers in
Their beds go dry; the streamlets cease to run;
The seasons fail, and famine, pale, possess
The earth as Bores does the desert sands.

“ Compared with this array of nature’s force
Poor human strength seems frail indeed; but then
The consolation is, inspired hope
That all is well with those who dare to do
The right and strive, in faith, to reach the rest,
Where darkness never comes, where morning spans
The day and praise possess the lips of all
The tribes that ever lived upon the earth.

“ No, no, my friend, don’t blame the sea. It might
Have been as placid as a mirror’s face.
The howling winds would leave her robes
Alone, her bosom heave no more, no sigh
Would come from cresting swells, nor surf
Break on the yellow sand. But then, if all
The winds were gone, what would the sailor do?
Where drift his argoses that glibly skim,

Unharm'd, the blue-robed bosom of the deep,
Like swans that hurry to some distant port?

“The gulfs and bays grow black in their decay,
Stagnation stands on land and sea and shoal
In grimy winding sheets, with laughing hell
Close down upon a ruined world—the curse
Of God and seal of death forevermore.

“No, no, we cannot blame the sea, nor sun,
Nor driving winds. They have their uses on
The earth ordained for them—a part of that
Great purpose in design of Him who made
All things to move in harmony with laws
Immutable to their appointed end.

“But to return from this innate review.
As rosebuds fresh renewed by gentle rains
And May day suns, with watchful care the waif
Grew into health again, and as she grew
In strength of form, she grew as well in strength
Of mind, and depth of noble soul sat on
Her face, that from her winsome smiles and large
Brown eyes enveloped all the house with charm,
So sweet and gentle; those who came to see
The gem and hear her silver, ringing, lute
Like tongue, did seem enchanted by the spell,
Imposed, with overflowing hearts of praise,
As does sweet canthies run when pressed
From ivy buds, and when they went away
Would come again, like bees released from night,
Fly to the sunny vales and nectar sip
From running roses and the lilac bloom,
Or as the children gaily tramp the hills
And dells in search of nuts and honey due.

“Three months had passed since her recovery,
The early summer, dressed in robes of green

And gold, smiled in her beauty in the vale,
The fields of waving grain and growing corn
Held forth their praise to Him who made them all,
And every garden, dell and hillside seemed
To vie with neighbor in fair rivalry
In richness of adornment, when I chanced
To meet the winsome miss, some distance down
The laughing stream, with apron full of buds
And dainty flowerets she had, with care,
Secured, wild growing in the blooming woods.

“She greeted me with smile that seemed to take
The gentle beauty of the posies on.
We paused and sat upon the sloping bank
Of that fair stream where tufts of velvet grass
Seemed to invite sweet converse and repose.
The trees stood silent auditors and all
Their leaves, gold-tinted by the setting sun,
Were shimmering as moved the gentle breeze.

“Some random gossip ran between us for
A time, and after pause, I gently said,
‘Nenona, you have wonderfully
Improved since first you came among us some
Few months ago, and yet in all that time
I’ve learned so little of your past, that now
I know no more than when we met, of who
You are and whence you came, except your name.
And yet my interest in your life is such,
That nothing more concerns me than to learn
Your antecedent history, as you,
From memory may please to give it me.’

“At this strong hint of inquiry she seemed
Oppressed. Her beaming face turned into one
Of sadness, and the tears slipped from her eyes
Down through her silken lashes like pearl drops,

And dripping undisturbed from burning cheeks.
Thus seeing her distress I sought recall
Of my request, and make amends for what
Might seem to her, in measure, something rude.

“ She answered not, but sat like one unstrung,
And lost in deepest reverie, as when
The ring of Sakasntala lost, she could
But grieve alone in her divine retreat.
Her thoughtful brow, in depth and stretch surprised
My gaze, as something wonderful in one
So young. Composure came at last as on
A pool of water, light disturbed
By pebble dropped upon its placid face,
And then she said unsteadily, ‘ I beg
Indulgence for this little show of grief,
That came as does a passing cloud before
The morning sun. The deepest sorrow oft
Is memory of blessings gone, and thoughts
Of those we loved who were, but now are not.

“ ‘ I should have told you what you now request,
Long ere this, but heartache held my tongue,
As hush holds down the pulse at mention of
Calamity, but then, if you will deign
To now and then, forgive a tear, pressed out
Mine eyes in this recital of the past,
I will proceed; perhaps you may have had
Some sorrows in your time as well:

“ ‘ ’Tis now a little more that fourteen years
Since first I saw the light on Lesbos, near
The city of sweet Mitylene. By birth,
My father was a Greek, with records of
An ancestry that ran into the mist
Of time; while mother was, by race and blood,
Aoelian. Its tribal settlement

Occurring on the Isle, ere Homer wrote
The Iliad, and Troy's ruin was
New history that had no record but
In memory of living men who in
The groves and schools of lovely Mitylene,
Culoni and Molivo, told with much
Parade the sights they saw, while yet the gods
Of great Olympus urged the bloody fight.

“ ‘ A brother had I older than myself
By seven years. And after one decade
Of life had passed, in all the beauty of
My home, surrounded by fair, wooded hills,
Broad fields of purple vine and olive groves,
That baffled time in steady growth, and reach
Across so many centuries.
My father oft, for change of scene and weal
Of learning Athens offered those he loved,
Would man his skipper, always moored secure
In little inlet near the home, that made
An eye of Port Culoni; thence with all
The household, sail across fair Ægean,
Seldom ruffling more her placid face
Than when the waving grain bows welcome to
Aeotus moving on a summer day.

CANTO X.

“ ‘ The way was fine, we passed sweet Pæara,
Round Cape Doro, through the inlet
Facing Hymethus, curving northward up
The channel to old Athens.
Those days now seem as dreams to me wherein
I held a golden horn, and from it poured
Unstinted bliss of fairest destiny.
The choice of everything came at request.
But most of all our parents were concerned
That we should have the best of training
Mentally, with social roundings that
Would cull the rough, uncanny growth of youth,
And set with plants the garden of our lives,
Untainted by the Upas; neither decked
With gaudy bloom of hot house cereus,
Which in a single night does open out
The glory of its heart, and withers ere
The gray of dawn appears; but rather plants
Of amaranth and anemone, with here
And there the myrtle bloom, sweet jasmine and
Pathway borders lined with violets.

“ ‘ No stuffing process was desired,
As when slim pigs are cramped into a sty;
But rather, as pure streams that trickle in
A silver pool, that circling, slowly brims
With shining water from the distant hills.
My brother learned beyond my depth; had with
It all, a nature so reserved that few,
Beside myself, could fully understand.
He loved the Hellas race as if a part

And parcel of himself; would camp alone
For days about the sunny vales, and with
His dog and gun inspect the battlefields
That have in all the centuries since then
Clothed Attica with sons in which the shades
Of heroes shine like jewels in a crown.
No date or name unknown to him, and when
In Athens I have often seen him stand
Beside a column of the Parthenon,
Unmindful of the moving stream of life.
His heart seemed in the grave with those who built
It in the infant world. He loved the grand,
Old masters, and with Plato talk as friend
To friend about philosophy too deep
For platitudes to hold an anchorage.

“ ‘ Conversed, it seems, with that great Stagirite,
Who in his exoteric work and depth
Of thought, stands like a shining pillar in
The dusk and haze of mental growth.
Met Solon, lover of sweet Salimis,
And solid glory of the ancient Greek,—
Who, base and noble equals made before
The law, and consecrated Justice stood
Well to the front, with even-balanced scale;
And Socrates, the searcher after truth
And knowledge of himself, when sophistry
Stalked thwart the temple door and rode to death
Its own surprised absurdities.

“ ‘ His love was such for Grecian blood
That when the Hellans had fierce contest with
The Turk, defending Christian creed, he
Ran away from home and joined the standard of
The Greeks, and then he wrote to me these lines:
‘ Tell our loving mother, all things else

May pass away, as dust before the wind,
And yet her noble council will, with me,
Endure, as precious grains of shining gold
That nurture and sustain, when ill betides.
And father will, perhaps, forgive my flight
To join a contest with the bloody Turk
That men may live who dare to worship God.

“ ‘ As for the nations, Christian-named,
That stand, cold-hearted as the polar seas,
Unmindful of the common brotherhood
Of man, and view a people struggling in
Defense of right and human liberty
Against a monster of the modern world,
Without extending aid or sympathy,—
Are but abettors of the damned, in aid
Of hell's dominion on the earth, that each
May hold secure its many robberies,
Without the fear of rupture with the rest.
And mark my word, that ripe will come the day
When all this ghoulish greed will fester in
The rotting flesh of those old cormorants,
And desolation feed upon their woe.’

“ ‘ Poor boy! In heart he had no wish above
His country's good; his fight was brief; at last
He fell with face toward the bitter foe,
And wrapped in colors that he loved so well,
Sleeps on a bloody battlefield in Crete.

“ ‘ My father grieved like one bereft of all
Incentive in the teeming strife of men
For worldly betterment, and went about
His work sad-faced and inconsolable
As Æneas for the fair-faced Nisus.

“ ‘ My mother seemed like one who calmly sits
Upon the verge of time and looks beyond

For consolation; shadowed hung her life,
As when the sun in full eclipse hath not
Expression, other than the shining breadth
Of solar soul that margins round the moon's
Dark border, all was glory left of light
In her fair face, and those who saw her then
Had impress of divinity that time
Could never wear away. I seemed the link
That bound in tie of earth those two great souls.

“ ‘ No word nor action did I stint to bridge
The chasm of despair on which their feet
Seemed merging for untimely fall. While thus
Consoling them as best I could, the tears
Would often flood mine eyes in spite of nerve
In effort to control them; yet when they
would start unbidden, smiles were forced upon
My face to shine a rainbow through them.
Thus some months in gloom and doubt were passed,
Till time, sweet messenger of rest and hope,
Dispelled the depth of shadow from our home.

“ ‘ The Ottoman, austere, cold-blooded in
His intercourse with other creeds, held sway
In all the avenues of trade in that
Fair Isle, and government thereof, as in
A vice, and after crushing Greek and friend
By butcheries and on the battlefield,
We, of that race, bore taunt and ill from them
Unceasingly, and justice of the courts,
With balance lost, stood on the side of that
Unspeakable, and since those creatures knew
My brother fought against their standard,
Treated us with jeer, dispicably.

“ ‘ And father, noble-hearted, bore the brunt
Of their indignities, which turned his face

Against the Turk, as turns despair against
The cruel hand that holds the shackles on
Distress, and ruined by the Ottoman
Financially, he did resolve to leave
Forever the fair Isle, so long his home,
Where Arion and Sappho sung, and seek
Seclusion in some foreign clime, and set
About, with many friends in like distress,
To build a boat, in which to sail across
The seas to find a home in fairyland,
Where western suns set in the Orient.

“ ‘ With some good seamen in the group, who had
Seen service for the state, with carpenters
Who knew their trade, it was in council, soon
Resolved to build a topsail schooner, rigged,
Square top, topgallant sail, full fore and aft.
With bent of mind to see what could be seen.
And hear with ears wide open every sound,
From saw-winged cricket croaking on the hearth
To calliope that hoarsely sings as pass
The packet boats, I never failed to note.
The men discussed the building of the ship,
And how it should be rigged and what
Should be its length and breadth and greatest depth.

“ ‘ From Mitylene the staunchest timbers came,
The seasoned elm, keel and ribs and brace
And beam and knees of laurel, tough as teak.
With knowledge of my father's grief, the wrongs
He'd suffered from the Turk, and gentleness
Of soul, bound all my heart to him as twines
A tender ivy round a mighty oak.
My sympathies were always with his work,
Just what he said or looked was law to me.
I had no love for surly Ottomen,

So, when I passed one anywhere my nose
Went up, like some young chipmunk sniffing at
The air, when hunter and his wily pack,
In circles, wid'ning, scoured all the wood.

“ ‘ Poor, simple soul! I never seemed to learn
That every conqueror of hate or stubborn will
Is he who strives to know himself and from
The golden scale of justice measure gives
For every one received, which makes a mead
That's worthy of the name, and for ill-will
Search out return of some beneficence.
How happy would the lot of man become
If we could only pattern after some
Old Eskimo, who kills a walrus or
A seal, and straightway serving it with all
His neighbors, share and share alike, while he
Himself with smiling face, most cheerfully
Goes hungry on the morrow.
My dear, old mother, sweetest counselor,
Did love her children as a lark her young,
That limping flutters from her gaping,
Blear-eyed brood to lead a danger off,
Gave to my active nature latitude.

CANTO XI.

“ ‘ Hedged only by my duty and the
Care of self, I rambled in the fields, as do
The linnets when the spring is blooming and
The heart feels everything to glorify
And praise the maker of them all. But when
The ship began to grow, and knowing well
The purpose of its maker, the current of
My life took angle strange. My dolls, so much
Beloved in former years, without a tear,
Were put in night-clothes and to bed, high in
The garret loft, where they, poor things, perhaps
Are sleeping yet. The drift and nature of
My studies changed, I lost romantic moods.

“ ‘ Utility unchecked, did stick her nose
In everything, and not a ship or boat
Which passed the little dock, that did not catch
My wary eye observing it; each mast
And spar and flapping sail, their length
And breadth were measured in the mind, and there
Impressed for future use; I singled out
The moorings of each rope, its length, its strength,
And purpose in the vessel's full control.
The shape of beak and stern, its depth of hold,
And breadth of beam, as if a seaman skilled
In matters of this kind; perhaps I ruffed
The spirit of old Homer, plodding through
His works to find the build of Memnon's fleet;
What merit had the galleys of the fierce
Achilles that was worth the copy of
A modern beak, or shape of maintop sail

That carries now our richest argosies?

“ ‘ But in this age of mammoth battleships
And merchantmen that stretch their length across
The waves at once, the Grecian outfit,
Sailing on the placid Ægean sea,
Three thousand years ago, seem but as tubs
With oar-locks on the sides, compared to those
Great whales that plow the mighty oceans like
So many leviathans, gulping up
The channel waters as they pass.
Well did they serve their aim and disappeared
Like phantoms in the mist of time.

“ ‘ Perhaps those now engaged will pass as well.
What then? What ships? What race prevail?
O, Destiny! No eye can see beyond
Thy veil, and stand we helpless on the brink
Of change, as does a mariner at sea,
With helm lost, and sails all blown away.
Perhaps it's for the best, that trusting souls
Should have no view of what is yet to come.

“ ‘ Three months had vanished since the keel was set,
True as a die, from which the little ship
Grew into shape, with swelling sides, planked with
The best and toughest teak with model set,
And painted azure hue, with band and bar
And trimmings white, the standard colors of
The Greeks; and there she sat in royal state,
Like some great duck just ready for a swim;
Everything in prime to make the launch.

“ ‘ I was selected holder of the cren
To christen her, and when she moved upon
The ways, slow, gaining speed as on she went,
Like some uncommon creature, conscious of
Her destiny. I broke the bottle on

Her prow, when mixed the foaming wine
With foam below, as down it trickled in
The deep, as spirit for her future use.

“ ‘ A few more weeks of patient work, and then
The boat sat proudly at the little dock,
Complete, and seemingly prepared to breast
The troubled seas of many climes, and make
A voyage distant more than half around
The world, in search of lands fair as we left.

“ ‘ Soon, supplies were all aboard and back
Accounts were settled up; of many friends,
With tears, took leave and with our souvenirs
We went aboard, with others, making up
A score of souls; twelve men, six women and
Two girls, and I, the youngest of the clan.

“ With sails all set we slowly moved out in
The stream, and down along the northern shore
Of Port Culoni, leaving that fair land
Forever, home and friends and ties of blood.
The sorrow of such partings wound and grieve
All loving hearts, which never fully heal,
But like all memories sanctified,
Imbue the soul as some old melody.
Few words were said, each seemed absorbed in thought,
No one companioned as the gentle solace
Silence gives. The village in sweet coves,
The waving grain, the meadow green, the corn
In bloom, the olive groves, the vine-clad hills
Passed by us as a dream of one fatigued
Into a gentle sleep. Three leagues and more
We measured thus; then turning sharp around
A high-browed headland, timber clad, the craft
Caught square in rig the swelling wind, and like
Some mighty swan, ungainly caged, breaks through

Its chafing bars, and with an even wing
And widely spread, sails outward to the sea.

“ ‘ Thus curving on the Ægean, southward,
Passing Psara, sweetest Tino, Cycladese,
The fairest gem of all the ocean; Out
At Milo, thence to Cerni, through its channel,
Touched Correnti, passed Tulada, on
The waters of the Adriatic. Thence
To channel neck of oceans, on which stand
The pillars built by Hercules, whereon
He sat, in time uncertain, watching all
The world’s great shipping; set the winds to fill
Its canvas; frowning when he wished to raise
A cyclone, scattering the argosies.

“ ‘ Thence curving southward to Canaries,
Once the peaks of mountains in the wide
Dominion of Atlanta, sunk before
The Arian dwelt upon the plains of Iran,
Reckoned deluge of the ancients
Sent by Deus as avenger on
The race for sin committed, when
The flood of old Ducalian came.

“ ‘ Thence south to Verdes, anchoring at
The Porto Praya for supplies, and viewed
The belching Fogo, from afar, that runs
Its red-hot lava in the sea, the dross
Of Vulcan’s mighty forges down below.

CANTO XII.

“ ‘Thence south, a little west, we sailed across
The torrid zone, in one great stretch, without
A stop, eight hundred leagues, through scorching heat,
Shot downward from the sun, as if that God,
Long-worshipped in the East, with blazing brand,
Had formed a savage league with Phæton,
Curbless son of Sol, to burn the world.

“ ‘When through the worst of that distressing sail,
Of heat, and calm and storm, we sighted off
The starboard bow, bleak Cape Saint Rouque, thence
Down, and scarcely twenty miles from eastern coast
Of old Brazil, we passed her woodland hills,
Her sunny vales, her rivers flowing in
The sea, with here and there a sightly port,
All hedged about with tropic growth until
We reached fair Rio, landlocked in the bay.
Three score and more of miles around and in
The charming beauty of the place and its
Environments we spent a pleasant month,
Made repairs upon the vessel's deck,
Laid in supplies to last three moons, then out
Again we floated with the tide; each sail
Was set and catching remnant of a storm
That pulsed to anger all the tropic seas.
Away we moved along the wonder coast
That changed as oft as some kaleidescope,
In varied hue and loveliness sublime,
Till sighted we afar the crowning cape
Of de las Virgines and entered then
Magellan's straits with rough hewn islands on

The south, and through three hundred miles
We slowly worked the dubious way, between
High ridges, desolate, and summits crowned
With snows eternal, till we rounded out
The dreary channel of Victoria cape,
And set our course northwesterly to run
A stretch of full five thousand miles to those
Fair isles that rest as gems within the crown
Of sapphire seas unequaled in their reach,
And where eternal spring is like unto
The sunny clime we left at Mitylene,
Where hope we had of sweet repose without
The jealous enmity of the Ottoman.

“ ‘ Without mishap of special note, we crossed
Again the torrid zone, and reached secure
The latitude of fifteen north and near
The longitude, one-forty west, within
A few degrees of the fair elysium sought,
When unexpected came a fearful storm.
The leaden haze about the setting sun
Grew ominous, the face of that great orb
Shone like a globe of blood; the scudding clouds
Denoted lifting winds; the sea did moan
As does a leviathan in the throes
Of death, and swell on swell did lift and fall
Like rolling ridges, capped with spray and foam.

“ ‘ Conscious of the fearful squall in sight
All sails were reefed and helm set to run
Before the blast; the little boat, as if
A thing of life, did tremble in her joints
As when an antler, hot pursued, essays
To make a fearful leap; her scudding, then
Commenced, and raced she with the wind and waves,
With leaps and bounds, unknown before in all

Her history; through foam and blinding spray,
And topping waves, with course set north-nor'east,
She ran at least a thousand miles, and just
As seemed the deluge to abate and when
We felt the worst had passed, the vessel sprung
A leak. The pumps were set at work and for
A day and night we labored might and main
To keep the craft afloat, till land in sight
Should give relief from perils on the sea.
The hope was vain; the water gained upon
Our work so rapidly the pumps were left
And to our boats as last resort we took,
Just ten in each; but soon the rolling flood
Swamped one; the other one, in which myself
And people were, seemed better manned, and hope
Sat on each dripping face, when came
With force an ugly squall and over went
The little craft and all went floundering in
The flood. I never saw my parents more,
Nor anyone of that fair band. I was
Alone, it seemed upon the sea, but soon
I lost my consciousness, and knew no more
Until I saw you bending over me
Upon the beach. I know not why I live
And all the others gone, unless it is
Because I had a large preserver on,
And being less in weight than others were,
My head had better chance to cap the waves.

“ ‘It was my hope that we, at least, should find
The forms I loved, but as you say, no one
Was found along the strand. I must assume
They all were lost past chance recovery.’
She ceased to speak; her hands were clasped about
Her face and scalding tears streamed from her eyes.

CANTO XIII.

“ Conscious of my duty well performed
I lived in peace secluded from the world,
With only Rover for companion in
My walks, and Sanger daily coming for
His hay, and rubbed his nose upon my arm,
When fed, as if to say, ‘ This is my thanks,
And when you wish my service, be assured
I shall remember all your compliments.’
The simple people of the lovely vale
Were kind and true and well content with what
The had—their little farms, their growing crops
And stock and ever-swelling flower buds.

“ Because I knew a little Greek, had read
Some books and could pronounce some words in Dutch,
The people seemed to think, in truth, that I
Was wonderfully wise, and oft would troop
Across the vale, to where my cottage stood
That I as referee, might settle some
Disputed point, such as the rods, or roods
An acre did contain; what seed to plant?
The grains of corn to drop in every hill?
What poison best to rid their fertile fields
Of rodent pests? What flowers should be grown
In pots? What roots to grow for dairy stock?
The safest medicine for chicken-pox?
And other questions more profound than these—
As depth to plow, or how to manage bees?
To dwell with people thus some one may say
That time is wasted opportunity,
Because the appetite of higher mind

Hath naught but barrenness to feed upon,
Without the quench of thirst for better things
That beam from upper levels of the mind,
Like burning stars that shine above the peaks
Of cragged Teneriffe and Everest.

“ But ere the verdict on this theme abides,
I beg you pause and counsel with your heart
To find reflection there of what we are
And of design for human betterment.
Wealth may last us for a shining day,
But brick and mortar have no souls in them,
And many gilded fronts that mark the line
Of some great thoroughfare, contain behind
But whitened sepulchres where feast and wine
Inflame the animal within to such
Excesses as the devil loves, and think
They live to purpose in the world without
A recompense for increment received.
Cold brick and mortar have no souls to save.

“ Great cities are, at best, but cancers in
The stomach of the world, that putrefy,
And but for increase from the rural homes
Would rot and stink with desolation.
God never made a city in the world,
And there are scattered ruins everywhere
To mark the destiny of all the rest.
God rules! His everlasting laws defied,
Have no condolence for the miseries
Of men who never learn the lesson of
Their lives, no more than pigs that fill with swill
And are content to sleep the stupor off.
God's bounty is sufficient for us all,
And some day each will have his share, when each
Shall recognize the right of all to live.

“Nenona, full recovered, grew in strength
And beauty every day, as when the chill
And sear of winter's passed, sweet Chloris comes
With all her train to garland early spring.
Her tender words and cheerfulness seemed like
A garden of exotics giving off
Its fragrance to each passer-by; and when
A day of recreation came for all
The children in the vale, and troop on troop
With cheer and glee went singing on the way
To hunt for nuts, or blooming treasures in
The woods, or romp upon the picnic grounds,
About Nenona flocked the spruce young lads,
And comely lasses, like so many birds
Of minor plumage, round a singing lark,
Unmindful of their own sweet melodies.

“She seemed as one who had no thought of self,
But was supremely happy in the joy
Of other hearts, as when the pearly drops
Of dew that glisten in the morning sun
Transform to sweetness, rosebuds drooping in
A garden poorly tilled and famishing
For showers that so seldom come.
Her dress, though plain and simple, always neat,
And every band and tuck set most complete.
Her golden hair, untrammelled in its sway,
Fell gently down in wave on wave, upon
Her shapely shoulders, like a shower of
Sweet crocus bloom put forth in early spring.
Her face had not a flaw, 'twas perfect Greek,
With hazel eyes beyond the reach of words
Conceived in song, or range of common minds.

CANTO XIV.

“ Their teacher gone afar to pastures new,
The people of the vale besought of me
To play the pedagogue, and prove the love
I claimed to have for all that did pertain
To them. And while I turned the thought
Of what was best to do, Nenona came
To me, and laying hold of both my hands
And lifting up her face, as does a rose
With glistening dewdrops swelling from its heart,
And all her soul reflected from her eyes,
She said, in words that harsh makes sound a harp:

“ ‘ Two years have passed since from a corpse, found on
The flood, you brought me back to life again
And gave me friends and home when all was lost
To me, and since that time have been my guide
And star of hope, with light as true and pure
As Carnar’s in his hold on Eridanus.
I know the vale in which we live is fair,
And much of earthly charm is gathered here
And then these dear, good people have so grown
The tendrils of affection in my heart,
That I can feel their hold and mastery
In every pulse, like thongs of gossamer,
Too fine to be definable in words.
I give full sympathy for all their loves
And for each ache and sorrow that they have.

“ ‘ So beg I for your audience to hear
My simple plea that you may grant this wish
Of theirs most willingly, and furthermore,
In this emergency, my selfishness

Takes shape decidedly. If teach you not
The school, what then? Some other must enlist
And who? So far are we from centers of
The world and pay so small, that brains we can
Secure, perhaps, will be most primitive,
And some of us have hopes above the bogs
And barren steeps of simple doggerel.

“ ‘And should you leave us for some other place
Congenial and better pay, I feel
The moon would never shine again,
My mother-tongue would fade from memory
As does a summer dream upon the coast
Of Labrador. Philosophy would live
As something passed, to me, and all
Ambition lose the prop of hope, and set
Afloat my craft of life without a sail,
And rudderless, to drift upon the sea.

“ ‘I know you have no present wish to teach
The little school. It's whole year's wage, in cash,
Is hardly worth a single thought of yours;
But then, how much of good would come of it?
The sprint we had did do the best she could,
And etchings on our simple mind did make;
But so confused they ran about, that when
We sought to find a point as center for
A thought, there was no anchor for a hold.

“ ‘It may be that I err, but then it seems to me
The smallest thought conveyed should bear upon
A greater one, so when the structure is
Complete, might be a tenement, for one
In love with gentle nature and with God,
With wish and crowning outlook far above
The selfish ends and plodding ways of men.
So if you will but take the little school,

I will most gladly pose as one of your
Small satellites and catch reflection when
I can to light my way to higher flights,
And preparation for the great unknown.

“ ‘ At times, perhaps, I might sail off among
The spheres and conjure up a thousand forms
Of beauty, there, and lean with confidence
Upon some myth unsteadfast in support,
Or on a crooked stick of poesy;
But be assured, I will return to sit
About your feet, as do the skipping lambs
Return, and tired, to the larger fold.

“ ‘ I see you hesitate, and have a look
Far off, as one who has a memory
Of other days, when life's bright dreams were new,
And through the mist and sere and yellow haze
Of time, discerns a form once counted true.
Why start at this? I meant no harm, be sure,
My brim of girlish freak does run my tongue
So much at random that I sometimes sport
With sacred things unmindful of the hurt.
If wounded you unheeded, sad I am
To know it, so, if worth a fig to you
As salve to 'suage the sore, I will apply
The balm of all my sympathy and love,
As showers down the myrtle's blooming sweets
Upon the earth, when shaken by the wind.’

CANTO XV.

“ There seemed no answer to a plea like this
Save yield possession of a fortress stormed
By dimpled wit and charming sentiment.
It seems there have been times when castle walls
And belching guns have bid defiance to
Great legions fronting them, but then what man
Can stand unmoved before such loveliness
Of form and mind, pure as the fountain of
Ar’thusa, soul enchanting as the harp
Of Amphion, with tact and gentle grace
That never seemed to recognize itself?

“ Austereness, grave as Nestor, sage of Pylos,
Would have melted like the polar snows
Exposed to glowing heat of tropic suns.
Consent secured, this ballowmas tripped through
The vale, like one who had important news
To tell, and everywhere she went, there came
About her sunny faces, as of old
When some fair Eastern nymph would sing
Delightful songs from Ramayana’s page.

“ When full installed as teacher of the school,
And every one was busy with the work,
I sought to find the soul of every child.
And he who studies here, will shed a tear
Of sympathy for human entities
With *lives* and characters inborn, which ill
Or good predominates, as circumstance
And antecedents may by dint constrain.
To find the drift and cause of character
And remedies to counterbalance wrong,

With application not constrained, is first
Of all, the problems which the teacher has
To solve, before much progress can be made.

“As illustrative of a multitude
Of temperaments, so plainly manifest,
I had a boy in school called Tony Flinn,
A little Irish lad, with lanky sides,
And eyes of gray, with head in knots behind,
Square forehead, ample mouth, new-moon in shape.
With corners upward turned. He seemed to live
On pranks, and did appear to have no aim
In life but fun, that helped digestion in
A way to make a stringy doughnut seem
An ample substitute for provender
Of prince, or kingly epicure. A pun
In words, slick said, would make him laugh a week.

“To get his mind full settled on his book
Was harder work than digging in a ditch.
With speller up before his face, his eyes
Would shine around its corners like the sun,
When shadowed by the moon in full eclipse.
His hair was short and red and stood like quills
Upon his head, with fair skin, freckled face,
And high cheek bones above a rounded chin,
Which counseled with a jaw of little force.

“To cure him of this ailment, nothing seemed
Sufficient, short of moulding him again,
As does a potter, remnants of his clay.
But scant of skill in this direction, I
Essayed to get myself a lodgment in
His heart, as does a sympathetic song
Of long remembrance start the brimming tear.
To fairly mould the human mind within
Its angled tenement it did appear

That hickory oil had lost its potency,
That while chastisement of this sort may curb
And cow the spirit for a time, it is
As plants of bitter fruit set out to grow
The golden apples of Hisperidese.
So after much of caustic drill and rough
Experiment, I hit upon this plan:

“One day when all the children were at play
This boy, by chance, the schoolroom entered for
His hat, when catching him around the neck,
I said, ‘Dear Tony, you are not, in fact,
A naughty boy. Your only wrong is fun,
Provoking every little incident
To roar the school when lessons are on hand.
Now, if you’ll straighten out your angle face
And settle down to sober work while we
Are all engaged, I will agree that you
Shall have a romp with me at every noon,
And tell a story that will make you laugh
With all the school, and count you as my friend.’

“In this display of friendly interest in
The boy’s untutored ways, there did appear
A glintage in his lustrous eyes, as does
A light that burns upon a distant hill
As beacon that a human form is there,
And with expression such as comes when soul
With soul conceives a unity, he said,
Between his sobs, ‘I know it’s wrong to laugh
So much and start the school to cackling when
The lesson’s on, but then, in truth, it seems
To swell and gurgle up like bubbles on
My mother’s tub when lathered for the wash.
But since you are so good and talk so kind
To me, I’ll try to choke my mischief down.

As doughnuts dry and forced, without a drink,
Until my full of mirth, without degree
Of impropriety, may flow at will,
And run at random as a passing stream
That's summer fed from all the woodland hills.'
Thenceforth young Tony loved his fun not less,
But books and teacher, seeming something more,
Loved order from controlling strength of love,
As sweetest dew in sunshine sparkle most,
Where flowers grow without the chill of frost.

"The hardest case in all the school was one
Ungainly Spanish boy, coarse-grained, with head
Straight up and wide behind, with crown well raised
And forward sloping down to near the brows;
With eyes like beads, in black, deep-set;
A sloping nose and short, with lips compressed
With corners down and jaws most prominent
That ran like bands of steel up through his face,
With bulging skull above his flabby ears—
A young gorilla born, a brute—what could
Be done with him? What virtue there impart?
He mixed but little in the romp and plays
Of other boys, but slipped about from place
To place, with cunning eyes, as of a fox
Nearby a flock of singing larks, or as
A wolf, full half concealed, reviews the lambs
That frisk about the field or glades of green;
To grind a bug or worm beneath his heel.
Or wring the neck of some lame bird, or stone
A dog, or hoot to scare the grazing herd,
Seemed but quintessence of delight to him.
To bid him do, was bid a thing undone;
And to destroy, was all he had of fun.
I coaxed and pled, spoke words of gentle cheer;

Shamed at his heartless acts and vicious moods,
Then plied the lash without avail, save at
Each sturdy stroke I saw his snake-eyes gleam
Like fiery glintage on a darkened stream.

“Revenge sat full upon his somber face,
While conscious duty was a blank to him.
The pity is, a creature, human, thus,
Was ever made, and made, all such, should have
No power left to reproduce his kind.

At last I gave the struggle up and sent
Him home, as one in whom the hope is lost
For better things, and clog to better lives—
And now, as last of these extremes, I'll name
The frisky, bright-eyed Robby Hutchinson.
He had a head, gourd-like, and handle off,
With extra swell behind his coon-like ears,
And flattened skull, commencing where the hair
In brindle kinks began to crawl up to
The crown; his eyes of hazel, had a light
In them, the hawk is not a stranger to;
His nose, full, high and drooping at the point,
Was not, in shape, unlike the eagle's beak.
His lips, thick-set and cut across his face
Without a curve, with jaw of ample strength,
And chin that rounded in a swelling lump.
His mind was bright and active as a mink's
He loved the sports afield, but ever edged
Toward the maidens skipping of the rope,
And tagged with them, when on the sly he could
Essay, without observe of colder eyes.

“His greatest fault was pilfering; no chance
Escaped he could improve to scoop a ball,
Or marble not his own; his pockets full
And bulging out with nuts and rusty knives

And keeps and pencil stubs and bits of string
Were laughing stock for all the grinning school.
With expert hand and undue haste he would
Divide some other student's hoard of fruit.
But never once conceived of such a thing
As kindly give and take in consonance
Of soul in human reciprocity.
He seemed, in truth, the early counterpart
Of many anxious men, who strive through life
To pile up wealth they cannot use, and die
Undone and lost to all the elements
That was intended should distinguish them
From ghouls and brutish beasts—unsouled—
To rot as carrion in a vaulted grave.
What can be done with such as these? The warp
Of life without the filling woof that makes
The tangle threadbar in the sight of God!
Surprising is the thought, and dumb we stand
Amid infinity of problems yet
Unsolved and feel about for evidence
Of what we are, with just a glimmer in
The distance of a star that moves the heart
To hope it is the harbinger to light
The soul of man to knowledge of himself:—
The centerstance of all philosophy—
To know which is to know the remedy
For all our ills and knowing, give us strength
Of purpose to apply the urgent need.

CANTO XVI.

“For three full years I labored thus among
This simple trusting people; proud they seemed
Of progress made by all their little ones,
And praised my work with many kindly words.
In these three years Nenona had outgrown
The place, as does a thrifty myrtle top
All lesser growth, with bloom that stinteth not.
The reputation of its excellence.

“She seemed the idol of each heart in all
The land, example in deportment marked,
And when distress sat brooding on the mind
Of some poor soul, a tear, or tender word
From her, of sympathy, that led the way
To hope, the darkness disappeared, as when
A cloud obscuring light unshades the sun.

“She had no art but that which nature gave;
No studied pose, or word to gain control,
But in her missions merciful, pure soul
Met soul, as do the welling waters of
A limpid stream commingle with the flow
Of some sweet river running to the sea.
In fact, all language stands abashed, and feels
Confused in utter helplessness to name
A pearl so true and constant in its light.

“But then, I felt that all things beautiful
Must pass. Infinity has thus ordained,
And though one staggers with the load imposed
At duty's call, there is no other light
Along the weary path of life that gives
To view the guide-posts on the way, but that

Which conscience sheds upon the trusting soul.
At times, it seemed, I felt like one who finds
A shining star and in supremacy
Of selfishness would hide it from the gaze
Of everyone but his, unmindful of
The darkness wrought upon the world by such
Ungainly mood and depth of littleness.

“So, curbing as I could, each selfish wish
And nerving all my better nature for
The sacrifice, I did resolve that she
Should go to some academy or school
Sufficiently advanced and skillful in
Design, to find the crowning peaks whereon
Consoling light of knowledge ever shines.

“Not such as blunt and bend and warp the mind
By sect or austere creed embodiments,
That circumscribe the broader range of thought
And cramp it in a sphere no larger than
The cranium of some assuming crank,
Or gloomy cloister, who prates of things
He knows not of—but to a training school,
That teaches God in nature, scope and breadth
So magnified, to fit infinity
Of space, and show divinity in all
Things made, inanimate and such as live
In form of man, as cap, and under him
The beast and bird and teeming world.

“So, on a golden afternoon that marked
The change of summer heat to autumn's edge,
With all its glory of maturing fruits,
When mingled green and yellow awnings on
The stately trees, hung passively in place
And whispered to each passing breeze of what
Their fate should be, and when their call would come

To move like some pale, mournful caravan,
To bosom all their sorrows in the earth,
As mortals do, when life has spent its force
For good or ill, Nenona sat, and I
Beside her, on the smooth, round, barkless trunk
Of alder tree, long prone upon the ground.

“Away to westward, where we looked, the sun
Stood mantled in a silver cloud, while down
Below his amber skirts, the sea’s great stretch
Of surface, marked beyond the horizon
With murmur undefinable to those
Who never heard its dismal tale of woe.

“While thus we viewed and mused in silence on
The beauty of the scene, I felt the time
Had come to speak of that which I would fain
Forego, had heart or duty prompted less.
While yet I thought about the manner of
Approach, Nenona thus delightfully
Exclaimed, while spread the soul’s imprint upon
Her face, as moisture follows foot imprint in
Yielding sand along the sounding sea:

“‘O, lovely land, of Lesbo’s summer skies!
In flowing robes of green and brightest gold,
Where dwelleth surely some Divinity
Of Amphion that buildeth up this scene,
With harp, enchanting in its melodies.’

“‘Well done,’ said I, ‘that strain is surely from
Sweet Sapho’s string, that sounds forever in
The fair, sweet, sunny streets of Mitylene;
But since romance does sink to littleness
When life’s oppressive load of care commands
Attention sad and seriously,
I wish a confidential chat with you.

“‘Five years and more have passed, Nenona, since

You came among us as a waif cast from
The cruel sea, like some surprising bud
From tropic zone, which we have nurtured in
Development, as does a botanist,
Some new-found treasure of the floral world,
Which, in its tender culturing, does lean
Upon its neighbor for support, with breath
Of rarest excellence. So has it been
With you, Nenona; more than all the hope
We cherished at your coming, has, in truth,
Been realized, for wheresoever thou
Art known in all this sunny land, there hangs,
Inviting to your pull, the latch string of
Each household, as a breath of blooming spring
Finds gentle welcome to all human hearts.

“ I do not wish to flatter you; in fact,
It would be vain to undertake a task
So difficult, and so I hope you'll take
No umbrage at these seeming compliments.
And if you claim that I should verify
My words, I will present to you a wall
Of human testimony that shall more
Than satisfy. If this be not enough,
I will collect the lovely linnets and
Fair kittens of the vale, and forming one
Great ring of all the people—you among
The rest—and setting down the show of birds
And little cats, as centerstance, and if
They move not in a drove toward your stand,
I will agree, upon my bending knees,
To pay the forfeit of this compliment.

“ But then I will desist. It is enough
To know you live among us now, and who
Has such effrontery to undertake

Description of the morning star, when she
Is manifest to every living soul?
The counsel which I wish with you is this—
By application most remarkable,
And measure of intelligence to see
The way, your progress up the rugged steep
That lead to summits of eternal light,
Has passed the stations where we have to stop
And resting, wonder what is further on.

“ ‘To cramp a soul that hath a flight like yours
In boundaries of such a place as this,
Is surely sacrilege of God’s intent—
To cover jewels with a rusty spade—
That should outshine the transient glory of
All earthly wealth, as arching rainbows span
The somber figure of the whirling globe.

“ ‘As brother, older by ten years, my wish
Has been advance for you and happiness,
And since there is no further progress here
Along the lines of higher learning, you
Must go where there is latitude to reach
Above the half-way round on which I stand,
That loving prophesy of all the vale
May be fulfilled—that you, in sober truth,
Shall ultimately gain the borderland
Where bar is placed that separates the reach
Of mortal mind from that which is Divine.

“ ‘Now, say the word that you will go from this
Poor stunted place, to learn the better life
And higher aim attainable by one
So favored mentally and morally
With all the excellence of soul and sense,
Essential for a flight of mind conceived,
That follows shining stars, when breathless

Others pause upon the brink of further flight.
The cost of such advance shall be my own
And I will make arrangements readily
And more than recompense shall be to me
The knowledge of my aid in this affair.'

CANTO XVII.

“ When closed I this well-meaning speech, she rose
And stood before me like a statue from
The mystic hand of Phidias, who had
The art to make a marble face and form
Breathe inspiration in the soul of all
Who has the fortune to behold his work.
Not rigid, stately stood she there, like one
Who hears her doom, yet steady as a star
Holds down the flood of her great agony.

“ Her eyes were on me like two orbs that look
Out from the depths of space, with sad reproach,
Expressive of surprise, yet no ill-will
Or thought offended seemed to cluster there.
I could but look, my eyes refused to gaze
Another way, as when enchantment holds
The mind engaged and blank is all things else.
At last her lips began to move and like
The strings of some sweet instrument that breathe
And quiver in prelude when lightly touched
By master hand, she said in tones that seemed
Like some forgotten melody : ‘ I grieve
To hear your words. My hope has been to live
Here always, have no other home, nor wish
No other while I live, No doubt you feel
This change is for my good. The sacrifice
You do propose to make in my behalf
Does well assure concern and wish to aid
To uttermost in making life for me
A fragrant bloom, full worthy of the care
And tender nurturing so lavishly

Bestowed by you and all the people of
This charming vale, but why transport a half
Grown linnet to another nest when all
Its heart is here? I never shall forget
The priceless aid you have afforded me;
A father never offered more to one
He loves; a brother, lover, often less
Yet, is it evidence of deeper care
To send a fairly fledgling soul beyond
The wish and haven of its greatest need?
To titled schools, where sage professors, glum
With mighty thoughts that shine among the stars,
Possess the only ideal that love and faith,
With straining nerves, should follow to the grave?
While more of thought and deeper culture of
The mind, is surely manifest, yet who
Will say that learning in the abstract brings
A creature nearer God than he who dwells
Within these blooming groves, with every thought
Turned inward on himself, and in the heart
Of nature delving to discover truth
And his relation to Divinity?

“ ‘ Like flowers grown in gardens fair, the mind,
Full tutored where gentle warmth of loving care
Stands thwart each avenue of yewpas growth,
Is surely sweet and most commendable.
But where is strength of such surroundings found?
Where teeming thousands hurry through the world,
With thought of naught but gain and giddy show,
While depths of sin and misery stalk on
The streets and harbor where the lights are dim?

“ ‘ It is accounted wise and great to soar
On eagle wings to find a star beyond
The keen of common men ; but then it seems

To me, a master-mind, unaided by the heart,
Is like a ship that goes to sea without
A rudder, seeking oceans fathomless,
And baffled by the winds, and currents crossed,
Brings back to port no treasured argosies.

“ ‘ Your compliments have been profuse, most kind
And seemingly sincere. I treasure them
As rarest gems, but cannot wear them all
At once, unless I make a gaudy show
That turns my head from things more serious,
And starts the flush of swelling vanity.

“ ‘ Do not forget my flaxen curls and dress
Of childhood’s gone. As well you say, five years
And more have passed, since chance or something else
Moved with me on the rushing waters to
Your out-stretched arms, unconscious of myself;
Helpless and frail beyond my youthful years;
The tender hearts and hands that wooed me back
To life again, will rest forever in
My memory, like fragrant incense on
An altar built of love, and for your part
In this affair, I have no words or song
Of praise, in any wise acceptable.

“ ‘ The days and months and years so kindly spent
To guide my steps aright, and bring within
The compass of my simple mind the true
And beautiful in thought and sense of soul
That maketh mortal something more than flesh
And blood and life a talisman in charm
To reach above the sordid aims of time
Into eternities of better things,
Is work of yours I never can forget ;
And hoped till now that I might ever be
Companion in your rambles through these woods

And learn to drink more deeply of the stream
Of wisdom ever flowing from your lips.

“ ‘ But since you bid my leaving this abode
For other climes—I know not where—to gain
More polish and less soul among the learned
Of other lands, I feel constrained to go.
Each selfish want and thought must be with me
Subordinate to wish of yours, for while
I love these scenes as does the simple child
A fairyland of butterflies, I know
Your counsel, ever good, should bear in weight
Above my preference, as does a star
The light and shifting dust of fading leaves.

“ ‘ You praise my work in aid of other lives
As most complete, but really, I think
Such work is never done, nor never can,
So long as mortals need a helping hand,
So long as duty calls, sad want we see,
And heart of heart does seek its sympathy.

“ ‘ Perhaps ’tis for the best that I should go;
But then I think the yield will surely be
But scanty recompense for what I leave.
Acclimating oft kills the fairest growth;
No jasmine can stand the winter chill
Of northern clime, and fades the myrtle bloom
Among the polar pines; why then attempt
What nature does abhor, in planting growth
Of tropic clime beyond the chilling range
Of Capricorn? No recompense will come
Of it, no more than ean of planting
Sunny lives, where wraps of fur and cold
Utility do sap the human heart
Of sentiment, and make affinities
In naught but selfish ends! A monster garbed

With gold seems God of more than half the world.

“ ‘ Why then attempt to further plant in fields
Where mortals are esteemed as dross compared
To shining wealth? Which is the greater need
In all the world today, a competence
With soul, and love for other lives, or gain
That takes the increment from honest toil?

“ ‘ Ah, Sir, solution of these thoughts are far
Above my childlike wits, but then, they will
Well up in every loving heart to plague
Philosophy that seeks to answer them.
It seems to me the fairest life in all
The world is that which is contented with
Enough and gives of that to help those more
In need, and labors earnestly for light
And truth and human betterment?

“ ‘ Each simple atom of the universe,
Each living thing that moves upon the earth,
Should fill its little sphere and be at rest.
It seems to have been so ordained, and he
Who clambers high upon the shoulders of
The race, regardless of the rights of those
Beneath, hath lost, in truth, the semblance of
Humanity, and monster makes of that
Which God intended should be help to man.

“ ‘ If pilgrimage to crowning schools of fame,
That overlook the busy marts of men
Is acme of the sunburnt country swain,
And highest aim in God’s utility,
Why does the forest bloom upon the plain?
Beside the running streams and on the slopes
That lift their verdure upward to the sky?
Where start the streams that glint the sunny vales
And sing to Him who made their shining pearls?

Why wave the fields and meadows blooming, with
The incense of Divinity, not cramped
Within great city walls, to please with form
And fragrance all the motley, moving throng?

“ ‘ The mystery no longer mystifies;
The cities seem no part of God's design
In makeup of creation, surely are
They plants exotic, breathing something good
And much of ill. It fact, they seem
As moral cancers in the stomach of
The world, that putrefy, unless infused
Continually with rural blood that flows
As limpid streams to purify the mass
Intoxicated with excess, is life.
Perhaps I overdraw the picture here,
And set comparison to grinning in
His sleeve, like some rude boy that dresses up
A doll ungainly for the sport of it.

“ ‘ But be that as it may, I now will cast
Objection to the wind and bow, in truth,
Submission to your wish. It may be that
The children will forget the little waif
That came among them years ago. I have
No right to claim their loves, as what I've done
Has been conceived a duty to myself
For all the care and tenderness received.
But still I go as goes the lamb torn from
Its mother's side with bleat and bleeding heart,
That balm of time can never fully heal,
Nor memory allow forgetfulness.

“ ‘ It seems to me that God is nearer here
Than any place in all the land. The pines
That worship on the hills; the sylvan nook,
The blooming glen, the silver stream, are all

A part of me as I in nature am
A part of God, and revel in the thought
That all eternity will never mar
Or dim this sweet relationship.
Deep in this wonderland, my days have passed,
And are remembered as a lullaby
When cradled by my loving mother's hand;
Or as the song of that sweet nightingale
That echoed music through the blooming wood
The night before we left sweet Mitylene.
Full conscious am I that I wane your time
On things of small account compared to words
And counsels wise you are disposed to give.
“ ‘ But ere my star of hope goes down and leaves
Me utter darkness, hear my last appeal—
It is of thoughts oft welling to my lips
In happy days forever passed away—
Of your infinitude of compliments
And gentleness of mind that fell upon
My heart like sunshine on a tiny plant,
That it might grow among the larger fold.
So let me say—For all this warmth and light
Thus caused by you to fall upon my soul,
Like heavenly incense from an holy urn,
I never can repay. Here is my hand
And in it all my heart. These all I have—
I never loved before, I never can again.’
“ At this she sank, subdued, upon her knees
Before me, trembling like an aspen leaf,
While, with her hands before her face, the tears
Ran through her fingers like great pearl drops,
Streaming from a golden horn of gems.
What could I do? What could I say? It seemed
I had no choice of approach, or wish,

Or hope of rescue from the summer dream
Of beauty kneeling there. So as a child,
I took her to my arms and folding there
In rapture to my heart, while kisses fell
In showers fresh and sweet as honey dew.

L. of G.

CANTO XVIII.

“ Fair days and weeks ran into nimble month,
As in sweet havens of Hesperides
Where happiness does sit in laps of ease,
And all the golden fruits of ripened time
Hang ready for a desert luxury
Of soul and sense and appetites of love’s
Warm breath and dalliance, unshadowed by
A cloud above the future’s horizon.

“ The time was set when we should be as one,
And all the vale appear as witnesses.
The day was that fair anniversary
Of Him who came to bless and save the world;
The little church, all decked in evergreens,
Late rose and lily bloom, did seem to smile
On everyone who entered *there*, as when
A floral arch bends in its welcome down
And greets the passing throng, delighted with
The scenery and graceful art displayed.
The tolling bell called all to worship *there*,
As did the star above sweet Bethlehem
So many rounding centuries ago.

“ With invocation to Divinity,
And songs of praise that lift humanity
Above the weary run of daily life—
Amid the smiles of all the multitude
The service was performed, and solemnly,
That made Nenona and myself, two souls,
In one, as with a band of gossamer,
Frail as a spider’s woof, yet strong as bands
Of gold when love is linked with common sense,

And purity stands by with balanced scale.

“ Another room was deftly added to
The cottage on the sunny slope, in which
The neighbors joined as do school boys, when much
Elated, build a habitation for
Some fairy queen that comes among them for
A summer's stay, with cheer and gleeful song.
Old Sanger seemed to know some enterprise
Was on the taps, uncommon to the place,
And pranced about surprised, yet gave assent
In neiker and in snort subdued.

While Rover wondered at the active hands
Engaged and watched each timber laid, as one
Not quite persuaded good would come of it.

“ When stood the cottage, quite complete in all
Appointments consonant with plan, I felt
The house too big for my sparse furniture.
So, hitched to wagon, boarded up, two span
Of dapple grays and sped away across
The hills, the journey of a day, to port
That sat on little inlet by the sea,
And bought a line of modest household goods,
Fair crockery and tinnery renewed.
A clock of dainty form, on either side
A maiden stood in Scottish dress, that held
Aloft its pointing hands and snow-white face
With dentures black, which marked suggestively
The hours passing on the wings of time,
Unchecked by storm, or sun, or mortal wish
To undo that which is already done.
When glossy furniture was all in place,
Fair crockery and glass in cupboard sat,
And kitchen ware in shining rows replaced
The rusty tins of uncouth batchelerdom,

And warning clock upon the niantel stood.

“A great reception was extended to
The loving people of the little vale,
Without a slight or stinting preference.
Perhaps there may have been such holidays
Before, perhaps there may be such again,
But anyway, the people did declare
That surely in the world there never was
Occasion half so joyful and filled
To brim the sweetest of amenities.
Thus started we, Nenona and myself,
With sunny maid as cheer and kitchen help,
To keeping house, untrammelled by a care,
Save that which ever moved the mind of each
To make the other always satisfied.

“Fair castles line the banks of sunny streams
And mountain steeps with moat and parapet;
And shining turrets, crowned with terreplein,
While all about are gardens rich in prime,
Exotic plants, all spiced by tropic suns—
Yet, who can say, in truth, they do contain
A happiness of sweeter growth than cots
Reared in the woods, or on the treeless plain
And thatched with strips of bark or barley straw.

“About my little home, with tender care
There grew a labyrinth of flowers, fair
As those that deck the throne of Flora, when
In league with May, its queen does shower down
With lavish hand rich gems plucked from the crown
Of Dryadese, who roams the pleasant wood,
And plucks at will her dainty doweries.

“Old Sanger, little worked because of long
And faithful service, ran at large and free
As ran the water from the sloping hills;

And when I harnessed younger stock to turn
The shining furrows in the field, this pet,
Spoiled by his own exuberance of worth,
Would watch my work and when the team stood still
Beneath some spreading tree to blow and rest,
As if inspector-general of the vale,
Came prancing up and with an expert eye
Tramped round and round my nags, as if to see
That every strap and tug and rein was taut
And best adjusted to the work in hand.

“While Rover, weaned from all his youthful ways
By steady training hand of time, would go
Along demurely, little heeding rat
Or squirrel, frightened, running from the team;
But when afield would curl up in the shade
To dream, perhaps, in retrospect of all
The years gone by, when active in the chase,
Or iron stand he ever took on guard,
Or when a danger seemed to hover near.
Thus passed the days and weeks and months,
In toil sufficient for our utmost need.

“Yet leaving leisure ample for sweet rest
At home, with her, than whom there never lived
A soul more heavenly in all the land.
If paradise hath welcome sweeter than
My own, and man in any way could half
Discover it, a song of praise would be
On every lip; distempered ills of life
Would disappear as did old Tiamat,
The hag of woes unnumbered—outward hurled
By potent Marduke, shrieking from the world.

“Two years passed thus in ease and happiness,
As does the time roll by in wonderland—
With all we love in gardens of the Gods,

Perfumed by incense from the floral world.
And then there came a change that checked the flow
Of earthly bliss, as when Feronia checks
The flowing streams,—then parch and wither up
The growth and glory of the nurtured plain.

“A sickness came upon Nenona, not
Uncommon to her sex, that taxed severe
The best of skill that sought to bring relief.
But all in vain, she faded as a rose
Just bursting into summer bloom on which
Untimely frost had set its seal of death.

“The people of the vale seemed stupefied
By this calamity, deep sorrow sat
On every face; brave men moved to and fro
Like shadows through the fields, in search, it seemed,
Of something, knowing hardly what, that might
Relieve the strain of nerve and troubled mind;
The women flocked about the house and grounds
Like doves that coo around their stricken mates,
Uncomforted by Clotho in their grief.
The day of her sad funeral did seem
The darkest ever known, altho the sun
Stood shadowless high in the arch above.

“Just yonder on that sunny slope we laid
Her lovely form, in life a shining star
That had no orbit through the cold, blue sky,
But in its daily round shed ample light
For sweetest leadership in all good works.
The little babe is with her there in peace,
And all the consolation left us is,—
The balm of memory that ever clings
To loved ones lost, with hope of union where
The skies are clear and peace forever there,
For all who love and dare to do the right.

“ How little seems the worth of life when called
To bear calamity like this, and naught
But fortitude and trust in God can stand
Against the growth of lunacy, that drags
The mind to gloomy bogs and bottomless,
Unguided by a single shining star?
I lived no longer as myself, for three
We were, yet two were in the silent grave.

“ My interest in the work about the farm
Did cease; and from the day we buried her
The neighbors nurtured it, and gave as rent
Whatever suited them. 'Tis wonderful
How little mortals need upon the earth!
I had no wish for company; reserve
Came over all my life and grief did sit
Consoler as the seasons slowly passed.

“ When two full years had fled without relief,
I cleared the rubbish and the rubble stones
From this surprising cavern—built by some
Eruption in the early ages of
The world, before old Thurnes cooled the earth—
Then bringing here belongings such as made
It comfortable, moving in the place
With Rover following. And thus I've lived
For thirty years, supplied with simple needs
Gleaned from the farm and garden there below
The grave, where, as you see, a crystal stream
Runs near, which is at times diverted to
The plot and used for watering the plants
And posies, hedged about with spicy shrubs,
Where in their tilling does allow escape
From gloomy solitude, that patient waits
Along the strand, with hope to quench in flow
Of Lethe remains of human memories.

“For many years I made an annual
Pilgrimage down to the golden sands
That line the ocean shore, and once did build
A little hamlet where Nenona lay
When rescued lifeless from the cruel sea.
But as all earthly work of human hands
Is evanescent as the falling leaves—
The first full moon that pulled to eastward with
The sun did flood the mighty stretch of shore,
And washed away my ruined tenement,
As lesson that the props of life cannot
Support for length of days the things we love.

“Poor Rover ultimately grew so old,
That like some sage philosopher, with head
Upon his paws, would dream away the time
And little caring for a thing beside
A crust. At last the flickering lamp went out.
And now, perhaps, with life renewed, he has,
With others, reached the happy hunting ground.
Who knows? Who can deny that mind of man
And beast is not, in fact, an essence from
A common source, and measured out to meet
The need of everything that lives, and soul,
But conscious memory of what has been?

“Since then I hardly go below the plot
Of garden truck, but never have I in
Those thirty, weary years, a single day
Delayed a visit to Nenona’s grave
And carried flowers there, the freshest that
The season could afford, and there behold!
The pathway beaten bare by weary feet,
Unrestful only on the lonely tramp.

“The time approaches for my final call.
More I am than satisfied with length

Of years, yet hope I that they have not been
In vain. As nature softens down the hard
Cold stones, with Time's erosive hand, so have
I sought each day to wear away some ill
Of soul remaining in my life, and make
A flower grow where aspen grew before.

"I know myself and know what nature has
In store for me. That dust to dust shall this
Poor frame return, and what there is in it
Of spirit shall return to sources whence
It came. If life exists beyond the grave
Wherein a soul can recognize itself,
I know that memory of evil deeds
Is conscious hell, and highest heaven only
Conscious duty well performed,
And that all faith is measured by its works,
And Isms stand before the Judgment seat
Confronted by the inquiry, 'What bring
You here in purity of soul, what mite
Of worth for human good, and measure give
Above the measure meted out to you?'
If death is an eternal sleep it is
God's will, and I will not presume to will
It otherwise; 'To be or not to be,'
It matters not so far as duty goes.

"The fairest soul in this abode of death
And in another life, if such there be,
Is, that which doeth all things well, with faith
In God that justice shall prevail.
This is the story of my troubled past,
Perhaps a fair example of the life
Of average men who live in every land.
It seemed your wish that I should say as much,
And only hope that you are paid for time

Expended thus. Perhaps the lesson may
Assist you in the years to come; we all
Need counsel as we limping go along
The thorny road, encouraged by the hope
That he who suffers most for righteousness
Will ultimately reach the shining mark,
Set high above all sordid things, where ends
The constant wear of earthly pilgrimage.

“Farewell, the night stands near meridian,
The half-full moon has set, the tide is ebb;
And nature sleeps; may peace be with us all.”

At this the Hermit closed his eyes, his lips
Were still and silence reigned in that abode.
Death was the welcome messenger that stood
Between two worlds and called the weary soul,
As does a loving mother whisper to
Her babe and sings an evening lullaby.
Most tenderly the people of the vale,
With many floral offerings, did lay
To rest the aged hermit by the side
Of his fair wife to sleep in silence there
While move the ages to the end of time.

Yosemite.

Whence art thou, spirit of the Evil Wind ?
And thy twin sister of the Ribbon Fall?
From womb of deepest chaos comest thou ?
Or did some late convulsion give thee birth ?
We will assume, that Vishnu wooed the " white
Robed Goddess of the hills," and in his warmth
Of love, does melt her frozen heart, and tears
Of bliss her eyes suffuse, while Venus weaves
Therefrom " a Bridal Veil " of diamond mist
And rainbow tints, so curved and charming that
The sun delights to linger on them, ere
" Cathedral Rock " its vesper bells engage.

These things to us reveal their mystery;
But whence the overhanging crags that hold
Aloft in dim outline, the crowning arch
Of heaven's azure, starlit canopy,
And frown like giant gods upon the deep
Recesses of the wooded vale beneath ?
Fair white-robed hills, for later Autumn clothed---
With green and gold of pine and cedar, for
A crown of waving plumage; will you please
A moment to forget your solemn grandeur,
And let your stony hearts, with human hopes
Bear sympathy,—and thus allow frail man
To learn a lesson of Divinity?

If answer hast thou not for me, consult
Thy lordly brother, proud "Yosemite;"
If knowledge yet abideth not with him,
Pray will you counsel "Rushing Water?"
And from "the Diamond Cataract," I'll weave
For you a jeweled crown of shining pearls!
All dumb and silent; not a single sound
To solve this mystery of all the ages?
Then speak to me, bright "Goddess of the Vale!"
Whence comes your crowning height? and thy grim mate,
The ball-domed sphinx, like "Martyr Mountain?"
I do beseech a whisper from you now;
You are not dead; God's life is in you, as
It is in man; we breathe to gather from
The same eternal source of soul and mind!
And what in Him is not, is not in us;
And what is not in us, does not exist!

All silent as the grave of ages, gone
Around the cycles of eternity!
Divest yourself of all this irony,
"Great Valley Chief," but second in command,
And learn me something of the things that were,
And teach me best how I can worship God!
Is there no hope to gain a clew that may
Reveal the mandate, bringing forth so much
Of wonder 'midst these torn and shaggy hills?
You are my elder brother, which I love;
Then give me half your heart a moment, so
That I may feel the common pulse of nature,
Beating through us all, as one in Him
Who doeth all things well, and I'm content,
And will refrain to further question you.
'Tis vain! One effort more and I am done!

At last, to thee I come, with invocation,
"O mighty Cloud Rest!" Tell me, if in truth,
Thou comest from the magic womb of time,
Forever hidden from the finite gaze?
Did God decree this wonderland for thee—
Or was it Fate that did ordain it so?

Long silence stood oppressed at coming change;
The somber mist turned pale with amber light;
As daybreak falls upon the crown of night;
Then rosy tinges of the coming sun,
Revealed the glory of that Awful One.

A tremor ran through all the crags and hills
As when in fright one feels his body quake,
And clutches object nearest for support.
The Vernal Falls turned green with envy at
The sight of that supreme uplifting—
Hooded round about with drifting snow;
While "Old Nevada" splintered up in mist
Her shining robes, to make a regal crown,
Dove-tailed about with bits of rainbow,
That some attention might remain to her.
Grand was the view the upland gods beheld!
Deep to the westward, winding in and out
Among the shrubs and trees and crowning crags,
The silver river, sunlit, sheen-like, seemed
A belt about the waist of fairyland,
That girdled more of beauty, grandeur and
Divine, than all enfoldings of the sweetest forms
That lavish nature has vouchsafed to man.

In silence, Expectation sat dumbfounded;
Sere, intent and still, the hoary heads

That guard have kept for many ages past,
In all this waste of crowning solitudes,
Frowned down upon "the Brother Twins," who stood
Upright and tip-toed for a better view.
Surrounded by his subjects, dressed in white,
On high Sierra's pure and burnished throne,
With face to westward, scanning many leagues
Of intervening woodland, hill and dale,
Did great "Mount Whitney," blank with wonder, gaze.
And in this hush of sound and waiting time,
Where seemed to hang an age of doubt and fear—
In every breath, great "Cloud Rest" murmured thus:

"For long, revolving ages, I, in silence
Held great Nature's secret, and designed
To hold it to the end. The magic key
Which chance hath given thee, unlocks my lips;
And now beneath the garb of theory,
Of which the book-fools prate so learnedly,
I will relate some antecedents.

"God rules! and next to Him in grandeur stands
These adamantine walls, o'er which have I
So long and faithfully presided.
Deep in the distance of the mighty past,
There was a time when this stupendous gorge
Was not. The rough-hewn hills which sat around
Like loyal subjects, waiting my command,
And all those higher, barren granite peaks—
Once held as giant pillars of the State,—
Knew no severance. Peacefully we dwelt
Together, massive, sere and winter crowned.
But potent forces, silent grew beneath.
The cooling earth did slowly crust about

The inner cauldron of the boiling flood;
And as the swaying igneous grew less,
An intervening space was formed, in which
A smoldering hell-force grew prodigious.

“The earth did swing, as does a whirling top,
And reel beneath, then came the mighty crash!
God’s great foundation stones were rent in twain.
The hills were broken up and chopped about
Like rolling billows on a troubled sea.
Destruction stood aghast and wondered at
Her awful work. The wealth of pent-up pearls
Did rush with reckless fury round the gorge,
And each division, severed from the rest,
Did seek to find escape. From point to point,
With murmur and complaint, the waters surged,
Until the verge of some high cliff was reached,
And then, like tramping soldiers, coming on
Behind the lead, at pace too swift for check,
They leaped together down the yawning gulf!
And thus the push of foremost from behind,
Goes on and on forever.

“Down in the mist of time
This wonder place did not exist as now—
Some clefts of granite rock and running rills—
And trees with intervening vales between—
But down and down a narrow gorge of death
These perpendicular walls did stretch below,
Till smoke and fire and fumes of gloomy hell
Did seethe and boil at touch of rushing streams,
That sought to cool the crater as they fell.
Instead, as now, of counting flights by scores,
These falls then leaped as many thousand feet,

Curved and lashed to fury as they went.
Cycling ages since have passed away;
Decay has scored her many victories;
Rock by rock, the yawning gulf was filled
From height of mountain spur and crater cap,
With silt and drift from sloping eastern hills,
Washed in from drifting snow and winter floods,
Did make this valley what it is, and set
Apart by Time's decree, these rugged cliffs.

“ If doubt of this great truth possess thee, dig
Into the bowels of the center vale,
A thousand fathoms deep, and there you'll find
The crumbling edges of the hidden walls,
And round about, slim-based, projecting crags;
And in between, dark caverns, grim and old,
Filled in with rubbish of ten thousand years.
God reigns! Decay does hang in every wind,
And ere another cycle passes out,
These crowning heights of flint and adamant,
Shall surely crumble, into level plain,
Or into rolling slopes, so gentle, that
The plowman's pride will be to smoothly turn
The yielding soil, with sturdy team and share;
To plant his crops and garner yellow grain.
Aye, all these feathery cataracts shall fail,
And disappear before the march of time,
As have God's children of these rugged hills—
Destiny ruled, ruined and forgotten!

“ If wish is thine to reach the soul of nature,
Claim thou kinship with the shining worlds
And learn a lesson which each sun and star
And satellite, has mastered long ago:

That innate force, by God's decree, does move
In harmony the mighty universe,
With every shining system leaning on
The others for support and sympathy.
So man should feel, in spirit and in truth,
A part of all that is, and realize
That purity of life with love and aid
For every living soul, is all there is
Of worth in all religions in the world.
So all are ever equal in the scale
Of God's ordaining, as the water drops
That fill the vortex of the mighty sea.

“Man, alone, of all his Maker's works,
Has failed in his appointing. Mind he has,
And well designed, but warped to selfish ends,
That make him strut about, as if he had
No other aim upon the earth, but clutch
With robber hands, each pearl and seeming prize
In sight, regardless of his brother's rights;
And helpless Want goes crying from his door,
As if the fullness of the earth was not
Designed by God for every human need!

“There seems no hope to suage this thirst for gain
And love of pomp and tinsel show in man,
Divinely formed, and yet a vapid fool
In all things great or wise, for human good.
For glut of wealth he'll hazard sense and soul,
And friendship spurn, as if it grew on trees,
Instead of precious jewel, richer than
A shining gem, or flower sweeter than
Sirisha bloom on brow of Sakoontala.

“ We grieve that it is so, and warn you that
The past reveals the future of the race!
Long, cycling ages come and go, into
The ocean of the past, while nations rise
And flourish for a time with peace and love,
Then fall like giant pines upon the hills.
And others grow from ashes of decay!

“ If thou, in conflict with the greedy world,
Yet have a heart and soul for better things;
Then seek to know that God forever reigns;
In truth, to know Him, is to know thyself;
To know thyself, is knowledge of the laws
That permeate the circling universe;
Without which, chaos would control, as does
The wind, the dust, or wafting heather down.

“ I leave you now, this is the last recall;
But ere my voice is hushed in solitude,
Some counsel will I, and a warning give,
Which, well observed, with faith, will safely guide
You in the golden pathway up to God!
The major hates of all the world are based
Upon the Isms, bred for selfish ends.
Your Maker hath no need of advocates
To talk much doggerel on sacred things
They know not of and try to prove a lie
By conjured text of horrid infamy,
And call it Brahma, or some Molock work.

“ The only blind are those who will not see.
God is the living soul of everything
In universal harmony with Him;
And every sin is violated law.

Praise is only truth personified;
Religion is the love of things that are;
Peace with God is duty well performed;
Heaven is but mind of purity;
And hell is conscience crucified upon
The altar of remorse."

Ville de Saint Nazaire.

[This good ship, "French, by manning and in name," left New York on Friday, March 4, 1897, bound for Port au Prince, Hayti or Hispanolia. Two days out, she encountered a fearful storm off Cape Hatteras, in which the vessel foundered. Of the eighty-two passengers and crew, only four are known to have escaped with their lives.]

'Twas on an evil-omened morning in
That month of all the year, which dresses for
A summer's day and yet so fickle that
Before an hour passes she has changed
Her mood and dons a robe of doubtful hue,
With flounces frilled and fulled for winter's wear,
That Ville de Saint Nazaire—by manning French,
And make, staunch in timber, mast and sail—
Did leave the Hudson, weird and shadowed by
Old Gotham, bound for port in Hispanolia,
Which Columbus thought the Ophir, whence
Fine gold and pearls did flow like shining stream
Into the coffers of that Hebrew king,
Who had no equal in the ages passed—
Where the Vega Real, watered by
The Yuma, sweet lamos and the plain
Of Cayes to the westward, green and fertile,
Fair beyond Arcadian dream;
And as an outlook, crowning all the land,
With head above the morning mist, stands old
Cibo, clothed with whispering pines and palms
And roble oak, and where the richest fruits
And fairest flowers grow in beauty so
Profusely that, with loss of Eden, Eve
Would have lived, supreme and happy there.

Thus bound and manned and moved by steam and sail
And wind, the vessel glided onward, while
The galley crew and passengers, with cheer
And sport and pun, and all the little ones
Went romping round the deck with hide and seek,
Passed pleasantly the breezy, fleeting hours.
Two days moved out upon the flood of time,
While Joy in flowing robes, sat queen of hearts!
And then there came a change. The ship had reached
That storm bound headland, where the gulf stream
flows

And vibrates like a monster of the deep,
With bulk of form so huge and breath so hot,
That currents from the shore-line rush to fill
The vortex made in air and sea by this
Old Leviathan, ceaseless onward moving,
When commotion holds communion with
The damned and all things human, helpless,
Drifting, flounders in the raging flood.

Oh, who has ever seen a storm at sea?
God moves the troubled waters there alone—
No fetish, old triumvirate; but One
Eternal as the everlasting hills.
Fair isles and woodland dells and mountain crags,
Beget in simple minds a host of gods:
But God is God forever on the deep!
Amid the warring elements of wind
And wave, that fight their battles o'er and o'er,
For such dominion as the gods abhor,
And pile up wreckage on the dreary coast,
Where ships go down and precious lives are lost,
Did Sunday morning, sere and bleak and cold,
With haggard look and blood-spots on the sun,

Find the gallant vessel speeding onward.
The murky sky grew dark, the ocean breathed
With ominous omen; and anxious Care
Sat silent on the Captain's swarthy face;
Sailors ordered, moved as though they knew
The danger lurking in the heaving sea;
While others stood like pillars at their post.

Squall on squall, came howling by, as if
To say, "Hell holds dominion further down!"
Every sail was furled; the masts and spars
Appeared as remnants left, all sere and bleak—
Of some old forest, tangled in the rage
Of tempest roar or western cyclone.
And when the weary day had passed and night
Set in, the bravest heart on board grew faint
With fear, for every heaving billow floods
The ship; great shoals of foam and surf poured down
The hatchways; engines ceased to move; the wheels
Stood still; fires quenched; the vessel logged
With bilge, and rushing water from the deck.
The bowsprit with the bridal ropes about
Its mouth did cower like a charger in
Some mortal combat; groaning like a thing
Of life; the vessel rolled from side to side,
As if death wounded by some fatal dart
Of steel, transfixed within its heaving heart.

"Low twelve," rang out the sturdy night watch,
But not the looked-for word that, "All is well."
And many felt as if it were the knell,
Before the leap into eternity;
So, every soul on board now sought the deck,
For hope of rescue seemed suspended by

A hair. Not one betrayed the horror in
His heart, except by blanching faces.
Freezing hands clung on to hilliard, stays
And running rigging-reft and lagging.
Every eye was on the Captain as
He swayed upon the bridge. "The vessel's lost;
No other hope is left us but the boats.
Let go!" Four of them floundered in the flood
A moment, then were crushed to splinters by
The ship. A lull, and then the other four
Were lowered safely in the wreckage lee,
And all on board were crowded into them.

Captain Berry took command of one,
Containing near two score of souls, all told,
Including one poor, weary woman, and
Four little ones, half-clad and weeping sorely.
The signal lights were carried in this boat,
And all the others ordered, it to follow.
But wind and wave too mighty for the men,
Did scatter them like feathers on the sea,
To meet each other not again forever.
Besides the drenching spray that swashed and flew
About the boat like white-robed diamonds.
The night was cold beyond endurance;
The oarsmen heaved and tugged and splashed amid
The ridging waters, with a stroke too deep,
And then a skip, with home thrusts in between;
And tiller held by one with nerves of steel,
And thus brave hearts, with hands half frozen, kept
The prow to windward—shoreward leaning, while
The others bailed the boat of foam and bilge.
And so the weary night moved slowly on,
As if she lingered in delight to witness

Human woe. Some, dazed and frozen, threw
Themselves into the sea, to rest and rock
Forever in the cradle of the deep.
There is no name for such a death! The brave
And laggard down together go, thus prone
And helpless as a cedar in a cyclone.
Yet all this horror strong men can endure
And whimper not at fate's decree, but to
Behold the prattling babe and little forms
Half-famished, clad, and freezing, clinging to
Their dying mother, begging for a crust,
Or comfort, does despair the bravest heart,
And sets the soul of anguish on the lips
Of him who hath a spark of sympathy.
O God! The weary, watchful hours of
That gruesome wreck, tossed on the flood, with hope
Stagnating in the heart of those within
The little skipper. Day by day the crew
Grew less, as many took their leave, distressed
Beyond endurance. Others died from chill
And hunger, with the mother and her brood.
With health and home upon a spot of God's
Green earth, the days move on like passing dreams,
Oft fraught with visions of the blessed, where none
Could wish a moment spent more pleasantly,
And all do grieve that hours are so fleet.
But save us from the ocean's wreckage!
Where sits the demoned hunger, gnawing at
The vitals; thirst that maddens for a draught
Of lashing foam, or gulp of that blue hell broth,
Surging further down, that burns into
The life blood like a fire never quenched
Until its victim seeks relief beneath
The frowning waters, coral stranded,

Robed in seaweed for eternal sleep.
Thus surrounded, floundered on the boat—
Old Time, in mockery stood still; the days
Seemed years; the hours, months, and moments, days,
Half halting with the ages as they passed.

A week out on the lashing waves, with *want*
Aboard, unbridled for his human gorge;
The little craft, unmanned, lay helpless, drifting,
When was sighted off the Fenish Islands by
The Hilda. All were dead but four wan forms
And they were raving with delirium.
Three bodies rolled with every swell upon
The boat's wet bottom, while at stern there sat
A form, half clad, upright and rigid, yet
Still firmly holding to the restless tiller,
With eyes wide open, peering forward through
The mist and spray, as if in duty bound,
Alive or dead, to keep the boat afloat,
And save the wreck of human life remaining.
God seems to have ordained it that the soul
Of man should be revealed when ruined hopes
And desolation overtake the forms
We love, and death's pale horse sweeps on
Toward the highlands of eternity.
But then, endurance of the bravest hath
Its limit; so it was with Pierre X. Mucore.
His spirit stood a moment on his face
And broke a smile upon his rigid lips—
For as he looked and steered he surely saw
The blissful haven of eternal rest
Where sorrow ends and joy forever reigns.

The Lover's farewell.

Leona, harsh Leona, how
I loved thee, tongue can never tell.
Leona, harsh Leona, now
With bitterness I say farewell.

The hope of all my early years,
Has turned to wormwood and gall,—
I go, but shall restrain my tears,
And no return shall meet your call.

You did by words and winning ways,
And all the charm that love displays,
Enchant my heart to sing your praise,
And kindle longings to a blaze.

Ah! laugh you may, you cunning elf,
Ah! laugh to scorn, this passion mine,
Ah! laugh, and look upon yourself,
As one above me, and divine.

Hadst thou restrained me in advance,
Hadst thou but said, "It is in vain,"
Hadst thou but warned me in my trance,
It would have saved my soul from pain.

But like a fawn to me you skipped,
When in the garden came I near,
And elfish-like, to me you tipped
Your hand and lip for welcome cheer.

How could I help to love a thing,
So lovely and so sweet to me ;
How could I help to feel the sting,
As he who toys the honey bee ?

And now you say you had no thought—
That I was like a little shad,
With crumbs and pin-hook glibly caught,
And then complain—"It is too bad !"

I know the power you possess,
To make a man an arrant fool ;
I know the charm of your caress,
And laughing, send a heart to shoal !

It is all ended now, my lark,
I know your method and can prove—
You strike a blaze, without a spark
Of sympathy, or light of love.

Laugh on, and giggle as you may—
I feel the steel within my breast,
I will not hope you to repay,
This poignant sorrow and unrest.

The blush of youth is on your cheek,
A smile enchants your lip to curl,
You will the hearts of others seek,
And when they're found, you'll call them "churl."

But in the matchless tune you play
Upon the chords of manly love,—
Beware ! there's sure to come a day,
That will, in truth, your ruin prove.

The sweet forget-me-not does bloom,
And crumble into shining dust,

But leaves a fragrance on its tomb,
That tells of love and sweetest trust.

And so it is with all things pure,
And so it is with loving souls,
Yet fickleness cannot endure,
But ashes to its lips it holds.

Farewell, your bitter day will come ;
Farewell, your youth will soon be gone ;
Farewell, your calloused heart, all dumb,
Will gasp for help when there is none.

I will not leave thee with a curse,
I've loved too well to harbor hate—
I've loved too well, and now can scarce
Resign thee to thy coming fate.

I give my hand and thus we part ;
I give my hand and wish you well ;
I give my hand but not my heart,
For such as yours is love in hell.

A time will come, as come it must,
When all your fickleness will fail ;
A time will come, when in the dust,
You may your thoughtless words bewail.

I go as one who daggers feel,
Who seeks to hide from further ill,
And temper up his heart to steel,
Against the passion with me still.

Farewell ! and may your faith abide,
That justice has been done to me ;
Farewell ! I go, as does the tide,
That sighing, dies upon the sea.

Carmena's Curse.

The miner's wife stood in the door,
The miner's wife at Hazleton,
With care her features spreading o'er,
From stint of fare her husband won.

Her dress was neat, with threadbare sleeves,
With mended skirt, of faded check,
With apron tattered at the eaves,
And ribbon bound about the neck.

Her feet were shoeless, white and bare,
Her face was of the Grecian mould,
Loose flowed, unbound, her yellow hair,
The counterpart of yellow gold.

Close pressed within her loving arms,
Her child was mantled on her breast,
While throb to throb the lifeblood warms,
The little one, with hand caressed.

Her eyes were strained far down the street,
Toward the miner's caverned hole,
As if expectant there to meet
The living image of her soul.

The cruel guns ! She heard the blast,
That murdered twenty mining men ;
She listened, watched each face that passed,
Before her on the slippery lane.

Then came in sight an ambulance,
Made of a miner's coat and tore,
And while she stood beside in trance,
They bore it through her humble door.

They gently raised it in their strength,
And laid in on the cheerless bed,
And there she saw, stretched out at length,
Her noble husband, pale and dead.

One shriek she gave, and to the floor,
Fell like a stick or cobblestone,
To see her helpmate grim with gore,
Her life, her earthly all, her own.

Dazed in the passing days that came,
Upon this harrow of her heart,
She grieved in silence, called his name :
" My dearest Leo, who us part ? "

Misfortunes come, not like the tramp,
Wan, sad and singly, alone,
But press in squads and with us camp,
Until all hope's forever gone.

Her babe, unnurtured, life went out,
As does a fitful fire spark,
As does a glow worm creep about,
Then close its wings, and all is dark.

Suns came and went, she saw them not,
Days passed like beads upon a string,
While listless by her little cot,
She watched the midnight's sable wing.

Then came another trial, fast—
The last she did endure but one:

The words "evicted" chilling blast,
Fell on her ears at Hazleton.

Her store of rags upon the street,
With ghoulish glee and curse were cast;
With hands about her breast she beat—
In tears she said, "This is the last."

That night she kneeled beside the grave,
Her child's and husband's—one with two,
And made a vow to help the brave,
This hellish work of fiends undo.

"Is this the work of men?" she said,
"Is this a land where Christians dwell?"
"That sanctions this—these miners dead,
This tyranny that's worse than hell?"

"This ghoulish wealth—the miner's blood,
That warm is shed upon the earth,
Ascends like incense to their God,
And gives the tramp an anarch birth.

"For every creature now that lives,
There's full enough without this strife,
For God to every creature gives,
The right of substance for his life.

"If greed shall take the toiler's bread,
Through forms of ill begotten law,
If greed has filled these graves with dead,
Soon Justice will the dagger draw.

"Old Shylock's millions running high,
While millions hunger for a crust—
While millions pine away and die,
And mingle with their mother dust.

“ Shall belch his lucre out again,
While woe and want, in frenzied ire,
Shall drench in blood the street and plain
And lash the rich with whips of fire.

“ I will not rest, God help me on,
To do, and as a woman dare,
The kings of earth to help dethrone,
And help the millions in despair.

“ God blast the Judge, his Judge made law—
God blast the fiend that has no heart,
Who in his meshes, thousands draw,
To rob at will and leave no part.

“ It is enough—the die is cast !
It is enough—it is the last !
The shackles shall from labor fall !
Or Revolution ruin all ! ”

May de Veres.

Full fifty years have passed since then,
And little boys have grown to men,
And men have grown to hoary age,
And passed like shadows from the stage,
From all their work and active life,
Of sorrows full and much of strife.

The little maids have reached their bloom,
Have reached beyond and to the tomb,
Have many fair and noble gone,
As dreams of early youth have flown—
Since May de Veres left my side,
With angel fairies for a guide.

Like tides that flood the dreary beach,
With sobs and sighs but never speech,
Has been the ebb and bitter flow,
Of heart and soul and earthly woe.
For her I lost for heaven's gain—
For her I loved—but not in vain.

A fever came, as does a thief—
Its stay was harsh but very brief,
It robbed the world of fairest gem,
It robbed poor hearts, and left to them
Who mourned the lovely treasure lost—
But faded leaves as of a frost.

Her dolly age had hardly fled,
Nor hardly had it found its bed,

In all its finest clothing dressed,
Sweet kissed and in her arm caressed
And laid away to garret rest—
Ere I had been supremely blessed.

Blessed in her love when but a child,
Blessed in her love with rapture wild—
And ere the warmth of sunny years
Had known of want or worldly cares,
I had no other thought than hers,
And with our play oft mingled tears.

Her father stern, forbid the coo,
Her mother's love was ever true—
And when she knew her little maid
Was skittish—in degree afraid,
As oft she did essay to be—
She plead that I would with her gee.

Her home was in a little glen,
Just where the vale sloped into hill,
Just on the merge of mountain fen,
Just by the run of rippling rill,
Where alders glistened in the light,
And hawthornes blossomed fair to sight.

The sweetest hearts lived in that cot,
Fair flowers grew about the door,
Fair walks about the garden run,
Fair vines the porchway spreading o'er,
As if to cheer the lovely one,
And seemed to say, "Forget-me-not."

It seems a phantom of the mind,
So many days have flown since then,
So many years of sorrow passed,

Since plucked we flowers in the glen,
And loved each other to the last,
While left we care and work behind.

Oh! can it be that it is so?
It seems a dream so far away—
It seems a dream of saddest years—
It seems a dream without decay,
Because embalmed in bitter tears—
Because I can no further go.

Though wanes my saddened lamp of life,
'Twas not in vain she went away,
'Twas not in vain she loved and died,
'Twas not in vain my lovely May
Did not become my earthly bride—
Did not become my wedded wife.

Oh God! how sad is thy decree!
Her parents grieved beyond control;
They drooped when Autumn's flowers fell,
As more and more they turned to soul,
And went to her in peace to dwell.
And one large grave contains them all,
And I alone am left with thee!

I feel as one upon a shore,
More gloomy than the darkest night.
With grief-stained face I wander o'er
The sands of time without a light,
Save that we have to mortals given—
Fond hope of better things in Heaven!

The cottage where my heart is left,
In glen below the crowning cleft,
Has fallen into sad decay,

And not a flower left to blow,
And not a path or sunny way
To mark where all the beauty grew.

My soul does brood upon this scene,
My mind with all its memories green,
Comes here for rest, comes here for thought,
Comes here for grief that has no word,
Comes here for anguish deeply wrought,
For voice of her that's never heard.

But then she lived not all in vain !
The soul of man is not so true
To things of earth, as those above ;
For while we linger here in pain,
We try of ill to much undo,
For worthiness of those we love.

I live as one who lives the past,
I live as one who's had his day,
As lives a tree that's felt the blast,
And in its heart does feel decay,
And longs alike for earthly rest
With soul to soul among the blessed.

There is no death where she has flown,
There is no sin where she has gone,
But purer far than roses bloom.
I'll claim her always for my own,
And live as one who lives to gain
A crown of peace—with her to reign.

Soul Harmony.

I love the streams that sing along,
The mountain's shadowed glen ;
I love the forest—not the throng
Of anxious, weary men.

Life's fondest dreams are found alone
Among the woodland hills,
Or where the warblers crown the zone,
With melody that thrills.

The sadness of the world is wrought—
Engendered by the race—
Of those who in their hearts have fought
The talisman of peace.

The Ignis fatuus of the hope,
That wealth will give us bliss,
Is but a strand of rotten rope—
The devil's hit or miss.

The glory of the world is not,
The gaudy dress and rod;
Nor by the glittering gold begot,
And worshipped as a god.

How vain are all these empty shows
Of tinsel-burthened prize,
Where Mammon into greatness grows,
While love and friendship dies.

The steepled church is not the place,
Where God will hear the call
Of those who seek to see his face,
With love and hope for all.

If purity of life we seek
Religion of the heart,
Kind words of love to others speak,
And bid the wrong depart.

Go counsel God deep in the wood,
And list the whispering trees ;
The warbling birds in cadence flood
The wings of every breeze.

Put down your breast upon the ground,
Your heart upon the sod ;
And throb to throb your soul is found,
In unity with God.

Sweet peace and love will come to thee,
Like incense through the air
Falls on the triune, one in three,
And three in one are there.

Time.

How unconcerned and willful do
We squander Time! Always present, yet
Forever moving! Half unheeded in
Our hurry for continual change,
With hope for better days. His footprints fall
Relentlessly upon each living thing,
The impress there remaining ever more,
Regardless of all wish of puny man.
His course is never stayed! No bugle call,
No moving legions on the field of blood;
The raging storms, the rolling floods or crush
Of worlds, are powerless to stay an ebb
Of that relentless tide that moves at his
Commanding, down among the shadows of
The dead, where silence is forever dumb.

His rounding out the dimpled cheeks of youth,
And giving to the lover all his dreams of bliss,
And every hope we have does hang upon
His evanescent wing, like lily bloom—
Or silver lining to a passing cloud.
How many gaudy castles, formed along
His pathway, in the morning of our lives,
Have tumbled into dust and bitterness
Of heart—is all remaining of the thought!
How strange the bittersweet—the bliss and gall,
That crowd each other on the run of Time
Like black and purple beads upon a string,
That round and round with him forever go!

How sad the thought that with a beaming smile
Of promise on his lips, that beckons us
To follow in his labyrinths, for weal
Or woe—we go in faith, and trustingly !

Yet while we go, we know that every step
We tread, there's echoes from the dead—that all
Who follow him must grieve for ruined hopes
And disappointments—dim with flowing tears.
But then, Old Fate has so decreed it, for
He holds a hand above us with a rod
Of iron to compel obedience.
The only consolation left us is—
That precious hours passing are our own,
In which to fit all for eternity.
We should improve these moments as they fly,
For all the wisdom of a world of men
Can never tell by learning or in art,
The record of a single day unborn.

Evil Omens.

In bitterness of soul there comes,
Like storms that brew upon the mighty main,
Where winds prevail amid cold sleet and rain,
And on the shores runs high the heaving tide—
While clothed in darkness, demons onward ride
With grinning front above the raging flood,
And dismal voice that echoes up to God:
A cataclasm in affairs of men
Approaches, such as there has seldom been.

Like noble form of some great goddess born,
The Nation sleeps, all sere, with mantle torn;
Her feet unshod, her lovely shoulders bare,
And in her eyes, great tears are gathered there,
Because, though slumber dims the mortal sight,
Within her soul there shines a conscious light
That ill betides of coming troubles deep,
While weeping thus, in pain, she tries to sleep.

This silent grief that from her lips escape,
Has caused her people to believe a rape
Has been committed on the form they love,
And now are anxious for a chance to prove
Where is the vandal who has done the deed?
Where is the wrong that makes the nation bleed?
Where is the hand that laid the goddess low
And struck the garland from her placid brow?

The murmur first, was like the sighing sea,
Or like a soul that struggles to be free,
That grows by sobs into a mighty wail,
As howls the wind about a shivered sail,
Until the Nation seems as if despair,
Would come to men and women everywhere,
As face to face they turn, as if to know
What hand is this that would the State undo?

As scudding clouds foretell the coming gale;
As frozen snow and rain, the rattling hail—
The flood kept back so long, of burning tears—
The crop of anguish grown for many years;
The famished infant in its mother's arms
Should bring the Nation fear and great alarm,
That will not down while millions short of food
Lift up their voice in prayer to God.

The scales are falling from the people's eyes,
The mists of doubt from minds obscure arise;
And now, as comes increasing light, they see
That courts of justice (?) grow the Upas tree;
That trusts behind them stand with hellish glare,
And bid them serve the people, if they dare!
And as these Judges know old Shylock's stealth,
They chose to serve these men of sordid wealth.

The public press contends that all is right,
That all the trouble is, bold cranks affright
"Old Confidence," and seek to keep away
The re-appearance of a brighter day.
And every ghoul and every beast of prey,
Who robs and kills, re-echoes, "better day,"
And try with skill to ebb the rising flood,
While all their aids declare, "There is no God."

There is no God but gold and lust and greed ;
And thus distressed, the Nation's gone to seed,
Amid the wreck and glory of her past—
Amid confusion that will ever last—
Until the people, hand to hand, contend
Against the monsters, who their forces lend
To thwart all justice ; robbers give their aid
And laugh to scorn a Nation thus betrayed.

All hope and truth have not forever gone ;
All honor has not from the Nation flown ;
Pale through the gloom that now obscures the light,
Like sunbeams breaking through the darkest night—
I see a gleam of hope, as tops the whispering pine,
When morning comes apace with light divine,
And with it comes the echo through the land—
“ Hail Brother, friend, come join us heart and hand ! ”

As drops of water, mingled, make the flood ;
As mites of dust, the universe of God,
So little hands and hearts united hold
A wealth more precious far than gods of gold.
A Nation's trust is in their mighty arms,
To bear her flag on high, when social storms
Arise from wrongs imposed upon the race,
By those who rule and grind the people's face.

Strong hands and hearts in union, joined with truth.
Can give the Nation sere, immortal youth ;
Can save the Ship of State that drifts ashore,
Amid the rocks and reefs and billows' roar.
Where wrecks of all the ages heaping, hoard
With loss of all the clans that went on board
So let each one assist to tack the sail
And hold with might the guiding tiller wheel.

Courage friends! the right will yet prevail,
And millions yet unborn, with joy will hail,
High on the ramparts, far above the flood
Of human wrath and all the hellish brood
Of ghouls who rob and on their victims gloat—
The banner of the free, with wave and float,
All stars undimmed and every stripe unfurled
That dares a danger and defies the world.

Lillian.

I knew her in her early years,
Before her budding bloom,
I knew her ere her childish cares
Had given the woman room.

Her face was like an open book,
Her heart was in her hand,
With grace of heaven in her look,
No angel could command.

She lived as does a fairy queen,
Within some sylvan shade,
To love her was but to be seen,
This blushing, little maid.

Her home was fair and bowered o'er,
Beside the singing sea,
Where shells upon the shining shore.
Have much of love for me.

Not that I love the yellow sand,
Not that I love the shell,
But that they oft were in her hand,
Or where her footsteps fell.

The ocean tides that sung and played,
Along the gleaming shore,
Revered her tracks wherever made,
And never washed them o'er.

And on the hill and in the vale,
Wherever she has tread,
The charm is such they never fail,
To grow a flower bed.

Her step is like the forest fawn,
That nimbles through the wood,
Or like the lambs upon the lawn,
In search of flower food.

When day has settled with the sun,
And stars come out to shine,
And take their places, one by one,
With faces all divine.

Fair Lillian takes her seat above,
On deck of gabled hall,
And sings with all the strength of love,
With voice of sweetest call.

While in her eyes there shines a light,
From depths of azure blue,
That dims the stars that twinkle bright,
And moon and all the crew
Of worlds that brim with fairy glow
To light the darkened world below.

The Old Man's Lament.

Dear Brother, Comrade, can you see
Beyond the gloom that now obscures
The life of poor men, bound and free,
And every one who wrong endures,
From those who rule and those who sway
God's people in their blinded trust,
Who toil and grieve from day to day,
And live upon a scanty crust?

Mine eyes grow dim with heavy years
Of ceaseless effort to remove
The blighted life and burning tears,
Of her I vowed to ever love ;
Of those intrusted to our care,
By Him who doeth all things well ;
By Him whose constant cross I bear,
And of his sweetness love to tell.

Four children given, have we yet,
Were raised in faith and humble truth
So deep instilled will not forget,
The lessons learned in early youth ;
Will not forget their love of home ;
Will not forget—go where they will,
The little house beneath the hill ;
And yearly now to it they come.

Sad days are these that come to me,
That pass like shadows, when the night
Is on the valley and the sea ;
And yet the mountain tops are bright
With glintage of the setting sun
Of life's fond hopes, and still they run
Above the amber-tinted trees ;
Beyond the circle of the seas.

Music.

Hast thou heard the murmuring music in
The sunbeam's whisper from the stellar world?
Or listened on some charming evening to
The silver-luted moon, that breathing, sings
Among the garden shrubs and mountain pines?
For he who hath a soul that does commune
With God in nature, holds the key that can
Unlock a world of beauty to his gaze—
And hear the sound of sweetest harmony
That falls like incense from the shining spheres,
Which move like gems forever round and round
Their common centers, lights outhanging, as
Fair beacons for fraternal guidance.
All the world is but a symphony—
If we could only still our souls to hear
The harp of nature, sounding all about.
But when thou seekest it remember this:
That pearls and gems will never fatten swine;
That music's jewel is the tuneful ear,
With heart and mind in purest sympathy
Refined to essence of divinity.

The Watchman.

Hail ! watchman, on the citadel !

Hail ! guardsman, at your post !

O, can you see that all is well ?

Or is the nation lost ?

Who guards the battlements around

The country's honor, fame ?

Where can the true and tried be found,

Who love their nation's name ?

Brave, on a thousand fields of gore,

The life blood of the best

Ran down and mingled with the shore

That skirts the soldier's rest.

Great spirits of the noble dead ;

Great sire and noble son :

Are not the skies with omens red,

As when your work begun ?

The flag you carried in the fight—

The stripes that sheened the sun—

The stars that twinkled in the night—

Where has their glory gone ?

Go, ask the toiler in the mine,

The farmer in the field ;

The sturdy merchant, in decline,

If they can see the shield ?

Go to the mothers, wan and pale,

Their children scantily fed ;

Go out upon the highway, hail
The tramps who beg for bread,—
Then tell me why this sore distress,
From causes, what, arise?
Who has the people thus oppressed,
And why the nation dies.

The bending heavens from above,
Proclaim God's care of all—
Proclaim equality and love—
Then why the nation's fall?

O, brother, can you not discern
The writing on the wall?
O, will you not in duty turn
To heed your country's call?

Secure you feel upon the wave
When plenty rules the land;
But helped to dig the nation's grave
As heedless as you ran!

The coils about your limbs were thrown,
When soothed by Mammon's creed;
You served their party as your own,
And helped the monster's greed.

His plan has been for thirty years
The people to divide—
Excite each to each other's fears,
And into power ride.

This done so long, there's little left,
Of rights these traitors heed.
There's little left—we are bereft
Of liberty indeed.

The banner of our fathers floats
High on the rampart wall;
The jeering traitor at it gloats
And wish to see it fall.

There is one hope—there's only one,
On land or on the sea—
One only hope beneath the sun,
To save sweet liberty!

It is a union at the poll
Of men who dare the right,
Where brother, father, soul to soul,
Will vote in *truth* or fight!

Who dare to break the tyrant's chain,
His bond and golden rod,
Though millions in the fight are slain
For country and for God!

Shakespeare.

Pillared halls in grandeur may rise,
And columns fair, ascending to the skies,
Or pyramids of wide extending base,
But monuments of some forgotten race
In ages past, perhaps were built by kings
For tombs, or grandeur which their presence brings
To living men, of what the past has been
In art and science since the world began ?
The crowning hills, the mountains, awe bespeaks
Where snows eternal, clothe their lofty peaks
At best, but dust, these haughty emblems are.
Their life seems as a day, when we compare
Their ages to the ages of that wonder one,
Who lived and died, half-known upon Avon.
Time's withering hand will crumble these to dust,
As all things else of earth time surely must
Bring down their lofty domes to sad decay,
But mind, of one who has immortal youth—
Who spake and wrote for all, immortal truth,
Can never from the Muses pass away.
Thus move great souls forever in advance
Of all things else, around their centerstance,
As moves Aurora round a shining star,—
So Shakespeare's works and glory will remain
When hill tops crumble to the level plain,
And lyric wonders gathering from afar,
Will sing as those who have no gloomy days,
Upon the harp and zither in his praise,

So long as mind to mind with soul adheres,
And moves in silence on the fleeting years ;
So long as turns in space the golden sun,
Or chattering rills to brimming rivers run.

Shall we live again?

O HORATIO,
I have been troubled with a thought
So weird and full of mental doubt,
That in its grasp my soul is shriveled up,
And all my frosting locks are set on end.

Like a lone sailor
Sounding the depths of an unknown sea,
With lead and line too light and short
To reach the solid bottom,
I have in vain endeavored
To probe the depths of eternity.
Hope has hung her shining mantle
On the crumbling brink of death,
And beckons me to speak the truth,
Wrapped in doubt and mystery beyond.
At times I seem a wonder to myself,
And with anxious heart I feel around
For evidence of what I am,
Like one groping in the dark.

The Christian's hope is based upon belief,
Confirmed to him by change of heart ;
While Swedenborg's disciples tell
That, through the visions of the mind,
They have beheld the conscious forms
Of loved ones counted lost,
And with them held communion,
Word for word and face to face.

Sighs and pines for something
Beyond the reach of mortal life.
The contemplative sage in solicitude,
And the burley, tatooed bushman
Running naked through the world,
Draw their highest inspiration
From the same fond, joyous source—
The innate hope of a hereafter.

How can it be thus, Horatio,
If there was not a purpose, a design,
In the make-up of creation?
If God has so ordained it, that the
Hopes and longings for a higher life
Are part and parcel of our being,
And has not made its counterpart—
A rest, a respite, beyond ourselves—
Then the crowning glory of His work
Is but a life-consuming fire,
Wherein the divinity within us
Is turned to dust and ashes.

A Drama

IN THREE ACTS

ENTITLED

Grover the first

WRITTEN IN 1894; REVISED

Cast.

GROVER CLEVELAND, *White House Parlor.*

MRS. CLEVELAND.

JOHN SHERMAN.

C. P. HUNTINGTON.

ATTORNEY GENERAL OLNEY.

A. R. U. DEBS.

JERRY SIMPSON.

SENATOR DAN VOORHEES.

SENATOR HILL.

SECRETARY OF WAR LAMONT.

POPULIST MOB, ETC.

Grover the first.

ACT I.

Enter CLEV.

And this is what the world calls greatness!
The circling earth to its uttermost
Doth surely herald our supremacy.
Men once counted quite my equals in
Affairs of state have grown so small in this
Commanding presence, that I do appear
Like Gulliver surrounded by his pigmies.
“A little brief authority,” as Shakespeare
Hath it, does not apply to me, for men
Were then much nearer equals, and the few
Who ruled did sport in skins, and eat their game
In hand, with twisted legs upon the ground.
That age of foolish kings who lived as swine
Has passed away like slickings from a flume,
And left the shining gold behind.
With this bright oar we lash and goad the men,
Who dig all wealth from out the solid earth,
To racks of want, with cords of usury.

Justice cries against us for laying on
This heavy load; but Justice hath no hold
On men who thong and bind their fellows down.
It is an essence of unmeasured weight,
That's seldom felt by him who deals it out;
And then, in this great Babel of confusing
Tongues, where each reformer knifes his brother's
Hobby to the heart, and strides some blunderbus

That shoots both ways, oft killing more of friends
Than foes; coupled with the servile press,
That freely feeds upon the spawn and spoor
Exuding from the loins of grasping wealth,
Until its ghoulish growth obtrudes upon
Disgust, and at command doth bay the moon,
Or howl oblivion down upon the dolt
Who dares obstruct the robber on his raids
Against the substance of the many,
That favored few may pile up greater wealth,
Do give us full control and pow'r supreme
O'er men and measures meted out to them.

Other souls, besides myself, have lived
With some pretense and show of greatness—
Such as Caesar and Napoleon;
But for a man all rounded out with great
Proportions, I have never had an equal!
And so crowned heads of sleepy Europe
And islands of the sea do court my favor,
Counsel seek; and should the king of kings,
Great Rothschild, so ordain it, I could spit
In all their faces with impunity.

But why stop I to thus soliloquize
While Fortune's flood-tide sweeps me onward?
Ere two more years of rule have passed away
The bubbling hell-broth I am stirring in
The pottage mess of want and woe and hate
Will fill the gaping maw of Anarchy
And start the froth of revolution.
Then the time is come to set a heel
Of iron on the heart of discontent,
And wipe the earth with all my enemies!
Between the two extremes in every move
There is a *midway halt*—beyond that point

We've passed, and now tend downward as the car
Of state goes grinding 'round the curves of time;
And every milestone pass'd too plainly shows
Increasing speed! Where shall we put on brakes?
A single swing along this doubtful road
May bring disaster to my glowing hopes.

But why grow nervous at the timid thought
Of failure when with mind prodigious,
Steady hand, and nerves of hammered steel?
With all the wealth and cunning of the world
To back me in this greedy enterprise,
There's little chance of failure in design.
The army is my greatest shield in this
Emergency. Its drill-beat now is heard
In every State, and lengthening lines of foot
And horse are on their way to Washington;
So all things do portend the coming man
Of crowning rank, and greatest destiny.
But when events herein portrayed
Shall make Ambition weep for other worlds
To conquer, what *title* shall I then assume?
"President" was well enough for those
Who have preceded me. Plebeians
Were they, and plebeians they ruled,
Advancement calls for men of higher mould
Than this scrub stock, and higher names as well.
Cromwell struck the middle ground of "Lord
Protector." Similitude there is between us;
But years by hundreds have so changed
The statis of the races ruled in Gaul
And England then, by petty lords and kings,
That I can hardly pattern after them.

So nothing short of Czar, Sultan or Shah,
Or Emperor, will well comport with all

My parts outlined upon the role of fame.
Which one of these shall I select? But hold!
I do believe "Grover the First" would be
A better name. Eureka! That will do!
So let it be on land and sea proclaimed,
By right divine this name transmitted down
The line of my prodigious progeny!

But, then! But, then! Hardly can I hope
To live *always*; and yet I have no son
To follow me. Two girls I have, 'tis true,
But she kings shallow up to nonsense, when
All dressed for show, in frills and furbelows.
In this affair the state demands full heads,
Foundation thoughts, and sound discretion.
What shall I do? And whither go for help
In this supreme emergency?

By zounds! there is one scheme, and only one,
To cheat the fates of their ordaining.
Napoleon's course with that Beauharnais gal
Does open up the way, and would allow to me
Another wife, perhaps of royal blood,
To bear male issue as successor to
Myself and ruler over all this people.
But, then, there is a side to this bold move
That does unnerve me at the outset.
If I could cram the sneering world into
One neck, of hate, upon a chopping block,
And stop its wagging tongue at one fell stroke,
Green-eyed envy would no longer belch
Its gall upon me, like an ugly adder
Spitting out its venom from the grass
On every unsuspecting passer-by.

And as a vent for all my pent-up rage,
In sorrow, more than anger, I will say,

If God from out this swinging world of dirt
Did make His true and living image here,
And place within a soul immortal,
Designed to keep man's carcass saint-like
In all this selfish sea of troubled life,
His work has been a dismal failure, sure,
And that bright place of rest prepar'd by Him
For those who live uprightly here below
Will surely be supremely lonesome.
And so, in all this clang of rasping tongues,
I can no further go than to adopt
A son and heir, perhaps of noble blood,
And on this line, I'll speak to Frances mine.

Exit CLEV.

Sliding doors receding. MRS. CLEVELAND AND CHILDREN.

Enter CLEV.

CLEV. The baby sleeps, I see, my loving wife—
Its mother's pet and surely greatest joy.
I only wish it was a strapping boy,
To take my place and don my royal robes
When I am weary of or through with them.

FRAN. What meanest thou, my lord and master?

CLEV. I mean some day that I most likely shall
Be titled king or emperor over all
This great and growing people, swaying them
As Cæsar did the ancient Romans.

FRAN. Indeed!

CLEV. Yes; and then you know great Cæsar died
Without the shadow of an issue,
And only for a sickly nephew chance

Did bring him forward at the proper time
The race of kings had ended with his death.
I cannot take my chances thus, you see;
In truth, must have male issue born to me,
And if this cannot be, must then adopt
A son—some one, perhaps, of noble blood—
To rule this people with an iron rod
When I am through with life and swaying them.

FRAN. You a king! And I step-mother to
Some other woman's love and favored son!
In heaven's holy name, what foul conceit
Possesses that surprising head of yours?
No! no! my Grover, not so fast; your mind's
Upset by its supreme importance, so
I'll get a rag and bathe your fever'd brow
With water from the fiery Congress well,
To which, for quenching thirst, proud Carlisle leads
On all great days of state occasion.

CLEV. Why jeer and taunt me thus, and set at naught
My will? Remember your degree of caste!
You were half-orphaned and unknown, in fact,
When I did stoop to call you wife, and deck
You with a title high above the thought
And hope of all your plebeian kin.

FRAN. If unknown when you did seek my hand,
I had a name as pure as drifting snow.
Hadst thou as much, my noble master?
A woman's love, unsullied by a stain
Or blemish, weighs in worth, when balanced by
A candid mind, much more than doughty
Titles won by men who slight all virtue,
Not appeasing lust or selfish ends.

CLEV. What! Thus speak to one of my account?
At whose behest the common herd doth sway
And bend, like willow boughs before a strong
North wind! Ye Gods, protect us from the din
Crowned tirade of a woman scorned!

FRAN. Why, man, what folly does possess you?
Surely you are rattled with your brief
Authority! and like a beggar, horseback'd,
By some sudden freak of fickle fortune
Seized; with whip and spur, through blooming fields,
And pleasant vales, where singing streams enchant.
And great armed trees stretch out their silvan shade,
With here and there a shimmering sun-bar
Passing through the breaks, and falling on
The emerald earth beneath, like jewel'd wealth,
Of all the world combin'd,—he breathless goes;
With blinded sight and sense unconscious of
A single thought, but that he rides!
So lay aside the gads and trappings of
Disordered will; smooth down to decent
Manhood all these rough-hewn thoughts of yours,
And be consistent, and yourself again.
If gaunt ambition had no hold on man—
Beyond conceptions of fair duty to
His fellow man—and all his limping ways
Were justified by conscience of his own,
Lax and laggard though it surely is,—
How chang'd would be the world in which we live!
Conceit would simmer down to hated dross;
Selfish lives grow dim with years of shame;
Great wealth devoted to the common good;
Honor stand as shining guideposts 'long
The path of virtue; chivalrous monsters

Cease protecting woman from insults
On every hand—not by themselves imposed—
While peace and plenty everywhere prevailed.

CLEV. Hold your rattling tongue, or surely will
I smash the hand of fate, that binds me as
A menial thus to take this tirade!

Enter SHERMAN.

SHER. I beg indulgence for intruding thus.
[*Aside*—A family row, as I do live!]
With your good pleasure, Mr. President,
I simply call'd to see you on that new
Bond issue, spoken of the other day.
You know Carlisle is on the ragged edge
About the doughhead bill of wild-eyed Bland,
Proposing coinage of the seigniorage
Of that white metal which has kept me on
The rack of censure since the dollar of
Our daddies died in seventy-three.
And so he's blowing hot and blowing cold,
Between a silver curse and gold adore,
With Shylock threatening for a scare;
And Jerry Simpson everywhere
Is railing for the people's cause,
For silver free and fiat laws,
To make cheap money for the millions.

And then your secretary, gushing, throws
His ballast overboard, and goes and sits
In Gotham at the bankers' elite feast,
And wined and dined so lavishly
That ere the groaning table's cleared
He was quite full up to the beard.
And then came learned financier, thick and fast,

From out his gaping jaws, of voiding laws
And obsolete, for bases of new bonds.
And then he said in ringing rhapsodies,
This Government is very great and can
Do many things, "but cannot make its money."
And now this loosened speech is working on
The public mind like brewers' yeast in tubs
And vats before the beer is made.

CLEV. Blast your bloody bones, John Sherman, for
This robber raid upon our privacy!
You're none too good to jeer about it on
The gaping streets and walks of Washington.

SHER. In the name of Neptune, Grover, what doth
Ail you? Surely something has upset
Your stern and ragged-edge diplomacy,
And left the wits within your lath'ring head
To swim around with gloomy chaos!

CLEV. Well, since you have presum'd intrusion on
My inner life, and kicked discretion to
The winds, I'll break the matter to you, thus:
You see, my wife is mad, and from Pandora's
Viper box hath pour'd her wrath upon me.

SHER. What outrage upon a noble woman
Could induce her silver tongue to lash
You with the scorn that's always uppermost
In every female heart, when deeply wrong'd?

CLEV. Well, you see, I have a scheme, born of
Ambition—reckless, you may call it, though,
But in conception, brighter than the moon.

SHER. Well?

CLEV. Well, you know, the ranting curs that yelp
Along our track like howling wolves upon
The pathway of a frightened flock of sheep—

SHER. Well?

CLEV. Well, in truth, I have contrived a plan
To down our enemies and all at once,
By punching these ferments to boiling heat
In blazing cauldrons of the common mind,
Until extremes shall meet in dire collision.
And then we'll bring to bear the heavy arm
Of force full drilled and so disciplined to
Our liking, down upon this herd of ingrates,
Who jeer at our endeavors for their good.
We'll do this under pretext for the care
Of state, with law and order for our shield.
All things will then stand still and tiptoed,
Waiting for the man of destiny;
And so, you see, there'll be no other one
But me to take the role of dictator,
A la Napoleon or a Cromwell.

SHER. Wonderful conception, I must admit,
Friend Cleveland. Nevertheless, there forces
On me an impression that the nearer
You reach the end in view, the nearer
Will you reach the hangman's halter.

CLEV. Hold fast your adder tongue, John Sherman, hold!
I can but feel the sharp rebuke that viper
Circles all your words, like stinging nettles
Bound about a rasping sore. You do
Forget that I but follow counsel of
Your own in this great game of nervy chance.
However much I do abhor thy presence,

Be assured that I will keep my pledge
To give you second place in this affair.
What riled the woman when you entered was
My kind proposal to adopt a son,
Perhaps of royal blood, successor of
Myself to rule this turbid people.

SHER. (*aside*) (Pray, good Devil, take me ere this howling
Fraud brings rack and ruin on us all!)
If ever I did hint a thing like that,
And promise league with you in this intrigue,
I now and here renounce my claim upon
Your favor. Sackcloth wrap about my loins,
And hot gall pour upon my foolish tongue,
For ever utt'ring such absurdity—
And ask contrite forgiveness of the Lord
For stooping thus to counsel with you—
But of advice, should I presume to give
It further, will just say, the world would be
The better off, and womanhood in purer
Moods promoted, should you in haste withdraw
From her whose heart, for years has been upon
The sacrificial altar, like a dove
Sharp pinioned over scorching embers.
Then, if ambitious of a greater name
And progeny of sire so big and grand,
Male born and greatly like your strutting self,
Lilioukalani surely would you better suit.
“Paramount” Blount did open up the way
And Willis hath the last obstructions mov'd
To your royal wedding with that dusky,
Dumpy, doubtful sea-girt maiden.

CLEV. Say, John Sherman, I will have no more
Of your corroding, clownish impudence.

Pray, who are you, from whom I gasping take
These saber cutting wounds, and whiplash stings
That drive me back upon my inner self,
For some defense that shall disarm you of
The spits and gads on which you roast me.
Of all the men divinely built of dirt,
And spawned upon the human race, you have
No equal, in the line, of aping honest work
In all affairs of state, where you can lend
The Devil service, underhand and
Secure, at Shylock rates of usury.

You've been a rasping clog in every wheel
Of progress started for the public good.
With all the cunning of a wily fox
Untreed for trespass on a chicken roost,
You struck the dollar from the coinage act
While in your hands, and then declared
Upon your honor as a man, no change
Material, had been made therein.
And years had pass'd before your cunning work
Was noised about and fully understood.
How much your share of all that English gold
Brought hence by Ernest Syed to help this deed
Of infamy, I cannot surely say.
By intrigue, worse than downright robbery,
Your Wall street bank is made a shining dump
For many millions of the people's gold,
On which for thirty years they've paid per cent
Bought up with bonds now interest bearing;
And so for all this time you've bled the Nation
Of its wealth, struck down the hand of toil,
That you might richer grow on bond per cent,
Per cent of notes thereon unfairly issued.

And while you get per cent on all those bonds

And all these notes, you hold the shining gold,
So purchased by these bonds, and loan it out
For your own profit, thus receiving
Triple rates of usury from the people
On one surprising single coin investment, not
Invested in the notes and bonds you hold;
Trading on your vote, affecting trusts
Has been, no doubt, a common thing with you.
And when Old Shylock wish'd a pliant tool
To make a law, or change some clause therein,
That would insure some other robbery
Under forms of legal villainy,
John Sherman was the man thought safest to
Employ, and thus your millions have been piled
Regardless of your sacred trust.

SHER. Hold just there, your Excellency!
'Tis bad for glass-house dwellers to be
Throwing stones; you speak of money made
By me precariously. May I
Enquire how many sheckels found
Their way into your own capacious maw?
Then you speak of my rough raid on silver!
Before you struck the White House stool nine years
Ago, your letters railed against an Act
By Bland, for monthly silver coinage of
Two millions, and when the chair of state
Was widened out to fit a carcass—
Ample in its hips and breadth of beam—
You wrote in Message every year against
Said Silver Act, and when your platitudes
Were smash'd to atoms by your good friend Beck,
Returned you to the sick'ning tilt again,
As does a sow to wallow in a hole.

How much for that you did receive I can
Not say, nor for the bills you father'd,
But this we know, that when your blind horse
Riding ended, forc'd by Tippecanoe
Born blood, you strode into your Gotham den,
Hypothecated and retained
By near a hundred gold-bug firms and trusts
And hook-nosed English syndicates.
Taking all these things together, there's
Small wonder that you were returned four years
Later, through uncommon use of gold—
And gab and mugwump paper plaudits;
Scarce seated were you when the hell-broth of
Disaster bubbled up on every hand
From full a thousand hidden springs of greed.

With your concurrence Wall street started out
Her sleuth-hounds on the track of every one
Who dar'd to cross their scenting trailways,
Demanding payments for their credits when
No money could be found. In every city,
Large and small, they urged their cohorts for
More cash, who in their turn did pounce upon
The merchant, tradesman and the farmer,
And every one did run amuck in search
Of yellow eagles, call'd to go to Gotham.
Trade stood still, appall'd. Ten thousand looms
Refus'd to move; the arts did lean upon
Decay, and ruin rested on the threshold
Of a million homes. Strong men were bound,
By cunning greed, to racks of penury;
Children crying, famished on the streets;
And noble women, nurtured in the lap
Of virtue, fed upon their own depravity.
The deed was done; and, chuckling in the face

Of want, you called your extra session, but
Design'd to strangle silver and its aids,
As does a midnight robber strangle
Peaceful sleepers in his ghoulish work.

If I have freely fed on fat things from
The public funds and moulded millions out
Of naught but cheek by jowl and cunning greed;
The part you've played in like proceedings
In your own behalf doth dim my record
In support of wrong—as does a pestilence
The memory of a stomach cramps induced
By eating corn, or green persimmons.
That I have done much wrong I do admit,
With much of sorrow and contrition bowed.
Unconscious of the trend, I've helped
To lay the viper eggs that hatch great trusts
And villain syndicates, which freely feed
Upon the Nation's tender vitals,
Like vampire bats, wing soothing as they draw
The life blood from their weary victims.

Received retainers have I from the State's
Despoiler's; fill'd weak banks and greedy ones
With gold, bond purchased for the purpose,
Under plea of needed coin reserves.
Promoted love of wealth insatiable,
In all ways helping me to get a part
Of it, and have not scrupled use in aid
Of Courts defending many robberies.
But all these ills compounded into one
Are but as little flaws in my long drawn
And checkered life, compar'd to those
Promoted by your single self!

Exit SHER. and CLEV.

ACT II.

Enter HUNTINGTON.

HUNT. It is distressing for a man of my
Account to be compelled thus nose around
And court the favor of a jackal pack
That's ghoulish in its greed for further raids
Upon the substance of the common herd;
But, then, I must secure some valid help,
For this obnoxious strike does worry us
And stills all conscience, while my wits do work.
The only hope I have, it does appear
To me, is through old Olney—witty cur—
To Cleveland's fierce but duller judgment.
This attorney sure will serve us well,
As we from nothing made him what he is
And can undo him with a single breath.

Enter OLNEY.

HUNT. Glad to see you, Olney. Any news?
Where does Cleveland stand in this great strike?
What is his mood to-day? And what says he
About the brewing storm? And what about
The use of Federal troops to put it down?
Will he espouse our cause with that blind force
Of human will that totters empires in
A day? Has he the nerve to stand the storm
Of wrath exuding from the common herd,
And all the fiery ordeal he must pass
In calling on the troops to stand between
The strikers and the moving Pullmans?

OL. Be assured, good friend, that all is well.
Your utmost wish has been anticipated.

You should have learn'd my cunning ere this time;
In fact, the fat retainers given me
By you and your prolific people,
With promise of far richer spoils to come,
Concludes me in the faith of this assurance.
You know the President is but a child
In state affairs. He's like a buzzing wheel
Of solder spinning round unsteady base,
While segments of the rim are flying off
At tangents, as events do press him onward—
No boat more insecure without a rudder,
Wind-scudding through a lashing sea of foam,
Than is the ship of state, with Cleveland at
The helm, unaided by my ready hand.
With Bissell's mail conveying order for
A mudsill, I have built a structure that
Will stand the storm of this upheaval.

So move your trains just as you wish them; go
"In usual and the ordinary way,"
With Pullman cars attached, and we will see
No harm befalls you through unlawful raids
Of these rough strikers who are food for dogs.
Gird up your loins with much of faith and hope,
Good friend, and leave the rest to me; I'll have
The troops on hand whenever needed for defense,
And on pretense of moving all the mails
We will protect your hated Pullmans.
And be assured of this, for if the worst
Should come, the bayonet shall be our first
Defense, then Spencers will play havoc with
The crowd. If these will not let blood enough
To satisfy, we'll let the Gatlings and
The cannon loose for better execution,
And when the brush is over you can sue

The towns and cities for all damage done,
And get for carrying supplies and troops
Some millions more of Uncle Sam's hard cash,
And so when final settlements are made
The railroads will be ahead and have
Their battle fought and won against the clans
Of workingmen, to their distressed undoing.

HUNT. Good friend Olney, keep your word and be
Assured of a reward magnificent.

We must put down these ranting union curs;
We cannot suffer them to gain a point.
Should they succeed in this supreme effront,
These domineering dolts would damn the land,
Dietate what kind of men we should employ,
The wages we should pay, what cars we run,
Tie up the moving commerce of the state,
And chaos come to every enterprise.

With this great contest won, no more we'll see
This hydra-headed monster starting up
At every turn we put upon the screws,
Designed to bind these ugly, selfish men
Within the lines subjective to our will.
And then, again, dear Olney, if you can
But help me pass my little funding bill,
The wealth of Ormus or of Ind is yours.
Our grip will be renewed in all the land.
The Western Coast will be content to "do
Our will"—to take what taxes we may mind
To pay, grumble not at transit rates, and leave
To us the courts and Legislature.

OL. Very well. I will obey commands of yours,
Considered now almost omnipotent;
And as retained by your munificence

Every branch of this great Government
Shall hinge its action on your pleasure.

Exit.

SCENE II.

Enter DEBS.

DEBS. We are undone; the strike is surely lost.
God help us and our country's waning cause!
Labor, writhing, bleeds beneath the iron heel
Of corporate and concentrated wealth.
Hope hath her pinions clipped by usury;
Distress has settled down upon the threshold
Of a million homes, and other millions
Tramp the streets and dusty highways.
Countless willing hands are idle now,
Great want we have where plenty should prevail,
While dumb the nation stands and paralyzed,
And hovers on the brink of revolution.
One hope alone is left in all this chaos
Of despair. One thought should move each mind
And nerve the heart for final contest—
The ballot yet is left us. Through it
We see the beacon light of better days.
A revolution peaceful and serene
By it may be effected. Who will grasp
The opportunity before it passes?
Let the little bickerings of the Nation's
Workers cease; burn from your bitter souls
The dross of selfishness; let unity
Of action be our ringing watch-word call,
And then with faith in God and man, and use
Of Ballots, we shall surely win this fall,

And save the Nation from the ruin
Now everywhere impending.

SCENE III.

Enter CLEV. Enter NEWSBOY.

Morning Herald! Latest 'count of 'lection.

CLEV. *reads.* "New York, November seventh, ninety-four.

One hundred Populist Congressmen
Elected from the South and Western States;
Seven Governors and Legislatures,
Same stripe, insuring as many Senators
For People's Party in the coming Congress,"
O, great Cæsar! Where is thy brazen shield?
And almighty hand that smote the Romans,
Give me nerve for such portend occasions!
This rough raid against my poliey
Must backward move, or ninety-six will see
These robbers running this great Government!
So, by the great eternal, I will smash
It with an iron hand, or—best perchance,
It is to use John Sherman policy.
"To be, or not to be," is now the burning
Question. Perhaps this hungry, scurvy crew
Of nondescripts can be seduced
By favors from my purse or patronage—
At all events I'll try it on.

[*Writes.*]

Here, Ned! Be quick, and take this note to that
Old ranting rancher, Jerry Simpson.—
This does surely let me down an inch or two

In my conceit, to eat black crow at my
Own table, hot swallowed and repulsive!

Enter SIMPSON. (Aside.)

I wonder why I am thus call'd to this
Detested presence? Perhaps the late elections
Paved the way to Grover's stony heart?

CLEV. Glad to see you, Mr. Simpson; take
A seat—but why in thunder came you here
All sere and sockless as a strutting stork?
Had you but mentioned your disparity
I would have sent you some of my best silks.

SIMP. No offense intended, your excellency,
But as to living in your musty hose,
I'll simply say I'm better housed at home,
Unless, perchance, I go fishing down
To Buzzard's bay and need an ample tent.

CLEV. Pray let that pass with wine and nuts
For two, and down to urgent business.

SIMP. "Let them pass with wine and nuts for two,"
Old socks, with wine, perhaps, 'twere good for you,
But my poor stomach will not take such draughts.
What's this great business boom and so portend?

CLEV. Well, laying jokes aside, I wish to know
If you would like an English mission—
One to Germany; or if the Russian
Eagles suit you better, just say the word.
They're all submissive to your pleasure.

SIMP (*Aside.*) Well, did you ever. No, I never!

CLEV. What, friend Simpson, think you of my offer?

There's not a man in this broad, sunny land
Who would not tumble to it all at once.

SIMP. Did your father die with rabies?
And was your mother witch-burned?

CLEV. How dare you talk so lightly of my kin?
If 'twas not for this damn'd diplomacy—
Observed in all affairs of state—I'd kick
You tumbling from my injured presence.

SIMP. No reflection was intended—only this:
I could not well account the parents of
A son like you to be right-minded,
Or having souls of good intent, so large
As spider woof, or chigger feet.

CLEV. Then are you so insane as thus to jeer
At my prodigious offer? O, ye Gods!
What fools thou makest of some people!

SIMP. Say, Cleveland! What the devil are you
Driving at? You seem to take me for
A cur, that thinks of naught but falling crumbs
And venison haunches half consumed!
You call me friend, when all the friendship now
Between us could be heated by a polar
Glacier. This you know; and yet you have
The cheek to offer me a shining place
In that magnanimous way the devil
Offered Christ possession of the world!
I see your brazen purpose; 'tis a bribe
To break this hold upon my people
And stay their growing hopes of some relief
From God and honest human effort.

You wish for me to go and kennel with

The bounds of old perfidious Albion,
Wear knee pants, full frills and powder'd hair;
Bend obeisance to sham shuttlecocks,
And lick the hand of rotten royalty.
No, never, while my name is Simpson!
I'd rather live upon my mortgaged farm;
Plod the turning furrows for my bread;
Pay usury to help the greed of man,
Than wear the velvets of an aping snob.
My people sent me here to aid their cause,
To check the hellish current of your laws,
And back destruction's roll upon destroyers.
My country's cause is mine, my conscience is
My guide, and may the harpies hang me
When I shirk or budge an inch from duty.
With eyes half open you should plainly see
The coming doom of those who plot and thwart
The public will. Honored hast thou been
Above all hope of common men, and yet
An ingrate art thou—coldly plotting for
The favored few, while want and ruin's
Running riot in the gaping land.
God rules, and, like His raging storms, full bred
In foul and stagnant air cycloning all
The filthy plague spots from the reeking earth—
So thou, great wonder of compound conceit,
Shalt surely feel, full-fore'd, the drifting scourge
Of public scorn, and chaos come to all
Your schemes and shameless villainies.

Exit SIMP.

CLEV. Zounds! If this does not amaze me much!
A sere and sockless hay-seed, cradled in
The western blizzards, toiling daily for

His stinted bread, in fields of eorn all split
 And splintered up by driving storms of hail;
 With zero for a bedroom, brae'd about
 With dung heaps running to the ridge pole,
 Refusing with disdain an English mission
 From my generous hand! Perhaps I do
 Mistake these sturdy people? Can it be
 That virtue hath a hold on men thus bred
 And born in want and mortgaged homes,
 Above the price of gold or stately hold?
 If this be so, and all the toiling
 Millions of the land should reach the meat
 And inwardness of these fine schemes of ours—
 Well seasoned for the men who feast and rule—
 Pandemonium would break out in spots
 As big as sovereign states, and woe betide
 The small and greater rascals of us all!
 But then why cower at such disorder'd thought,
 Some there may be of this Simpson kind
 Who value honor more than shining place.
 But sure the gall and grit of all the world
 Would make but few *such* hide bound fellows.

Exit CLEV.

SCENE IV.

Enter VOORHEES.

VOOR. This surely does beat Wabash butternuts!
 To think that I have crawled so far in slime
 And filth to sate the lustful power of one
 whom I detest in every move he makes!
 But, like Golgotha—lore of ancient Jew—
 There is a strange oppressive spell that holds
 The will of everyone who passes by

The bust and hoo doo head of Cleveland.
But then, I've gone so far in eating dirt
My master calls upon me thus to swallow,
That should I stop to vomit now, the world
With all its gaping jaws, would know the part
I've played in this unpleasant business.
And so I'll keep my counsel to myself
And gang me further homeward.

Enter HILL. (Runs up against Voorhees.)

HILL. Hello, stranger! Who are you, thus prowling
In this gloomy wood so late at night?

VOOR. And you, who keeps me butting company?

HILL. Just lost my way in passing through this place.
And may the devil take us both if there's
Design or any mischief in our blood!

VOOR. No mischief prone in me of any kind;
No more than in a lonely suckling dove
That's hunting for its truant mother.

HILL. Then on this theme we are agreed,
But who are you in name or deed?

VOOR. Long Dan, a senator from the Wabash.
Now, may I know your name and place?

HILL. You should remember Hill from Gotham old.

VOOR. And so we meet as if by chance, and since
We do thus meet, pray let us have a talk
About our pique and little differences,
And try regain the friendship once we knew.
And to begin, I'll ask quite pleasantly,

Why do you drub me with your stinging tongue
Whenever you can make a run upon
The President; in faith, I do but grin
And chuckle every time you slaughter him.
To save the party I have stuck to this
Old fraud through thick and thin and taken
All the prods and gads and jeers of hate
From every cutting tongue, and thus impal'd
I've walked the Senate floor, and in the streets,
Like a lion wounded in defense of that
He hates, and scowls at all observers.
In favoring schemes and selfish ends of his,
I've ruined all my future hope of place.
So on the Wabash all my power's gone;
Friends once counted dear do turn upon me
With a glare which says as plain as words,
"What next do you design in villainy?"
I gave my aid in striking silver down
To sate the greed of this great monster.
Detested always have I stocks and bonds,
And yet in haste did I excuse Carlisle
For issuing them. Cleveland wished my aid
And so I gave it like a slave regarding
Nothing but his master's stubborn will.
I have upheld the Wilson bill, as one
Large fraught with Democratic principle,
When, in fact, it is a patchwork of
Concessions, dovetailed in together with
As many cuts and colors as the rainbow,
And now as void of justice as the devil
Holding court to judge a wayward soul.

HILL. Well, Dan, in truth, with all my heart I do
Forgive you, as I wish to be forgiven.

Circumstances held you down before
That hope destroyer, till faith no longer lives
For him who has betrayed a sacred trust.
You know I've hated Grover Cleveland as
The devil does a holy sacrament.
I will admit the chief degree of gall
Was pour'd into my cup two years ago,
When he did rob me of my rightful
Nomination, now my hope is gone,
Because he's left no rallying point
In all the chaos of Democracy.
And so I have declared in every case—
Save, of course, that hypocritical
Episode so recently on the boards.
Bill'd there to fully boost me back into
The party's lead and thinning ranks again—
The canvass now is on for ninety-four,
And we are out the field of politics.
The race goes hot between the rotten G. O. P's
And sanguine Populists who ranting run;
But since old Tammany can never get
The lion's share of spoils the present year,
We'll have to skulk in camp, while watching wait,
And live on Gotham blood and little windfalls.

VOOR. Well, since old Wabash seems with Weaver's
crowd,
I'll leave my party in its shroud
And go that way as well.

Exit HILL and VOOR.

ACT III.

Enter LAMONT and CLEV.

CLEV. Glad to see you, Dan. How prospers now
Your drills and mobilizing of the raw
Recruits. A crisis seems to be at hand,
And we must be prepared to choke it down.

LAM. The army's safe as frozen cider,
But this election news is very bad.

CLEV. How so?

LAM. Have you not heard reports now coming in,
Relating how some dozen States have gone
To Weaver's ilk, insuring to his clan
Election and the loss of place to all
Who hold them now, including some control
Of Senate and the House, and two years hence
Will see *you* boosted from your chair *unless*
The army aids us all in holding it.

CLEV. O, great gospel of the holy prophets!
Do you tell me truly? And if so,
What provision shall we make to thwart
The purpose of these ranting lunatics?

LAM. 'Tis true as heaven's everlasting law
That no effect can come without a cause.
As to the *course* we should pursue in this
Emergency I will say, with anxious care—
Companion and stepmother of discretion—
We can with ease control the rising tide.
But first: confusion worse confounded must
Be wrought by punching up to boiling heat
The foul fag ends of hate and party feud,

And egging on the servile press to breed
A doubt within the public mind as to
The count in every State, where pretext can
Discover ample way. We have, you know,
Some blanket dailies yet remain with us,
Which strike the licks that ring around the world;
And then the weekly town, and *Rural Press*
Is mostly in our hands, all purchased with
Cheap ads of stocks, and nostrums, notes
On banking, finance news and charity
Gifts by plutocratic cormorants—
All prepared to order by our agents.
With these great aids combin'd in our behalf,
Wisely used in casting doubt upon
The votes returned from sources other than
Our own, clash will come the public mind
And cleave asunder honest men, who wish
Always to guard the right, but, when deceiv'd
And wrought to heat by fakes and cunning lies,
Do battle for the wrong with nerves of steel.
And then will chaos come, and if we do
Not lose our mother wit we'll win the fight.
The hand-to-hand contest that we shall have
To meet will be a struggling, howling mob.
Half crazed by rum and gnawing hunger. Then
With brazen cannon set in every street,
With stomachs loaded full of shot and shell,
We'll leave no place but death or gaping hell
For those who dare to stand before them.
The army proper, fifty thousand strong,
Well drilled, is ready now for action.
The country's quotas now are coming in,
Full fifty thousand more, disciplined
On the road, which I shall hold reserve

In fort and camp for this emergency.
With lavish hand we've used the money
Meted out to us, upon those raw recruits;
And then, by special dispensations,
Lined we the pockets of commandants
With these bright eagles, until love of gain
Has sapped the soul of patriotism
And left but bones and skin as cover for
A whitened sepulcher, wherein did dwell
The heart's enthroned divinity.
For, as you know, this shining gold will gnaw
The conscience out of every one of us,
As does a cancer eat away the flesh
Of one who struggles with a deathly grasp,
Until his body rots in its embrace!
So, in this swim of life and living well,
These God-like men have devil turned
Beyond control of common decency,
And with their belching guns and spears in hand
Will coldly cleave asunder friend or foe
Who dares obtrusion on their mettle.
The forts around this city are secure,
Full provisioned, guns well trained,
With shot and shell sufficient for a siege.

CLEV. Good report, my loyal secretary!
Now, buckle on your armor for the fray.
Ends well all things well ordained.
How long this strain will last no one can tell;
But when the break-up comes, as come it must,
Be sure our fortunes move upon the flood
As onward float we on this turbid stream,
Or else the eddies near the shore
Will find us helpless circling with them.

And now, farewell, till out of chaos comes
Subjection to my will, and rule supreme
Over all these warring elements.

Exit LAM.

CLEV. (*meditating.*) And so the game is set, and I must
roll

For all the pins, and if I miss the mark,
My head may roll from off my shoulders!

Re-enter LAM. (*excited.*)

LAM. Your excellency, our cause is lost.

CLEV. Lost?

How dare you tell me such a tale as this,
When just a moment since you said that all
Was well and everything on top? And now
You say our cause is lost! What ails you, man?
Fright has surely taken all your wits
Away, or else I can but call you mad.

LAM. Yes, mad, and lost beyond redemption!
For full two years we've both been worse than mad,
We've run at large while madmen should be lock'd
Beyond the call of harm; but being mad
And loose, we have, for lust of power,
Maddened sixty million people, who
Are now to be aveng'd for ruin wrought
By us, to fiends or devils turned.
And so the streets are full of wild-eyed men,
All struggling, yelling come they up to this
White mansion, full intent to take us hence
For swinging rope or bloody guillotine?
And then, again, it does appear that God
Has so ordained it that the soul of man
Shall break from shining shekels when the test

Does come between betrayal of the rights
Divinely planted in each human breast—
The love of home and largest liberty—
And men with cunning measures meting out
Destruction to all rights and forms and laws,
By themselves dictated and imposed.
And thus the raw recruits on which we did
Depend for aid in this emergency
Have, as one man, ignor'd this volunteered
Subserviency, and from the smoldering
Embers of their early love of home and truth
Have kindled up a fire, that greater grows
Behind each flying spark of precious time,
And in this swimming rush of discontent
The heavy jaws of fate are closing back
Upon our hopes and forms like earthquake cracks
Upon lost victims, sifted in them.
And so the fruit of all this hellish work,
More bitter than the gall nuts from Aleppo,
Press our pallid lips for tasting.

CLEV. Is this handwriting on the wall like that
Belshazzer saw? It looks that way just now.
The seas of want and hate are running high,
And all the tides at once seem striving for
The topmost roll, as on and on they come,
While stand exulting devils chuckling in
The breakers nearer shore, awaiting there
To gather in another crop of fools.
It cannot be that we are lost in this
Amazing strut of cranks and trades and long
Haired yeomen, lately so much cowed
That you could kick them in the streets like curs.
And send them howling to their dirty holes.

Lamont, I wish to know where are those men
With minds prodigious, trustful, great and true,
Whom I have chosen for my counsellors?
I need their aid to help me bind a load
Of retribution on the backs of this
Unyielding people, till they cry aloud
For peace and rest from many ills by me
Inflicted on them for their jeering hate
And disobedience of my sov'reign will
In all affairs affecting this great state.

LAM. Most of them have made provision for
Themselves. A Wall street banker gives Carlisle
The second place for favors and support.

CLEV. Devilish cheap for such subserviency!

LAM. The trusts have given Olney great retainers;
The G. O. P's. have Gresham in their fold again;
Hoke goes cotton planting down in Georgia;
The howling hayseeds in the woolly West
Have stripped poor Morton to the tender skin,
And now he's bathing in his wife's great tub
To get the tar and feathers off of him;
Brave Herbert's got the Charleston out to sea
To rid himself of your good pleasure;
Wilson's bad digestion of his tariff bill
Has given him the gripes; Dan Voorhees' corpse
Was found this morning floating in the river,
Lashed on lengthwise to a Wabash sapling,
There being no more schemes of greed to hatch,
Or corporation pipes to lay along
The lonesome avenues of ruin'd trade.
John Sherman's waddled off to Canada
With all the boodle he can carry.

And so your excellency and myself
Are all that's left of that great clan of men
Who tried in vain to hold a nation down
By blasting, as with fire and racking scourge,
Each growing hope or prospect of relief,
That we might ride, rough shod, with gad and spur,
The hag of fortune over it.

CLEV. Get out with all your rot! I'll have no more.
Betrayed me, have you, as a dog deserts
His master in the midst of howling wolves?
I will not yield! There's nothing lost to me
That this strong arm cannot recover.
God rules the seas and circling universe,
But not more surely than I rule this people.
Woe supreme may shadow all the earth,
Hell gnaw out the solid bowels of
The rock-ribbed hills, and burn to dross
The Alps, the Andes and great Everest,
But all these ills compounded into one
Shall not deter me from my onward course
In this great game of rule or ruin.
Expectant troops await my coming now
In fort and field. I will assume command
As Cæsar did on like occasion—
Break through this seething mass of maddened men
With shot and shell, and show the gaping world
A hero never yet surpassed!

LAM. Too late your fervor comes to stay the tide.
Of human wrath, that sweeps upon us
Like a raging sea, relentless, 'round
A shiyered vessel in midocean.
These jarring walls their purpose do portend,

Like bloodhounds on the track of some great game,
Long baffling them in hot pursuit of it.
Do now, with lolling tongues and panting breath,
Cavorting, yelp and bay around a hole
In which the monster has found lodgment.
And thus it is with thy commanding self.
So, if no way of exit can be found,
You will surely swing to Hades from the arm
Of injured Justice, long by you defied.

Exit LAM.

C'LEV. With all my ponderous weight of gall,
I must admit, in truth, that I have been
An aping fool—fed on presumption born
Of mind disordered by a tickled sense
Of great importance, strutting as a king
Supreme, and lost to all discretion!
I've sought to lead in schemes outspoken
When common sense would call an honest man
To follow in the wake outlined by Truth
On every day of my conceited rule.
I've warmed a viper in my breast that's stung
Me deathly. Now, there seems no certain cure
Or antidote to take away the sting.
And so just retribution finds me here,
Undone, disgrac'd, alone in grief and fear,
With some returning sense of conscience lost.
So now, with not a mourner by my side,
I go to dregs and endless infamy.
And if I can to find a crack or hole,
That I may pull in after me.

[THE END.]

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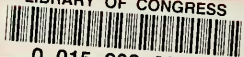
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